



2027-2028 Infrastructure Trail Funding Guide



Nova Scotia
Off Highway Vehicle
Infrastructure Fund


NOVA SCOTIA
NOUVELLE-ÉCOSSE
Recreational
Trail Expansion



Trail Funding Process Overview

Introduction to Infrastructure Funding

Simplified Grant Applications

The guide simplifies capital grant applications by allowing a single submission for multiple funding sources.

Collaborative Funding Approach

OHVIF and CCTH collaboration supports streamlined funding and reduces administrative burdens for trail groups.

Guided Application Steps

The guide provides detailed instructions for submitting EOLs, attending intake meetings, and completing applications.

Focus on Project Execution

Streamlined processes enable trail groups to dedicate more time to project work rather than paperwork.



Key Dates and Deadlines

EOI Submission Window

Expression of Interest opens September 1, 2026, and closes November 1, 2026, at 11:59 pm.

Full Application Deadline

Full applications must be submitted by February 1, 2027, at 11:59 pm for funding consideration.

Funding Decision Dates

OHVIF decisions April 1, 2027; RTE follows 2027-2028 budget approval.





Funding Programs – RTE & OHVIF

Recreational Trail Expansion Program (RTE)

Program Goals & Eligibility

Trail development and upgrades on recreational trail to increase opportunities for Nova Scotian to recreate in the outdoors. Up to 2/3 of capital costs, to a maximum of \$150,000.

Scoring

- ✓ Community Benefit and Impact 20pts
- ✓ Needs Assessment and Project Planning 20pts
- ✓ Trail Strategy and Department Priorities 35pts
- ✓ Viability, Sustainability & Project Funding 25pts



RECREATIONAL TRAIL EXPANSION PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage (CCTH), offers the **Recreational Trail Expansion Program (RTEP)** to assist municipalities and not-for-profit organizations in developing new recreational trails, expanding recreational trails, and making capital upgrades to existing infrastructure and connectivity in order to increase opportunities for Nova Scotians to recreate in the outdoors, connect with nature and to get moving which respond to the goals of the [Shared Strategy for Trails in Nova Scotia](#).

Eligible Applicants

- Registered community associations and non-profit societies with active status including clubs and associations.
- Mi'kmaq Band Councils, Municipalities and Villages.

Eligible and Ineligible Initiatives

- Projects eligible to apply for up to 2/3 of total capital costs to a maximum of \$150,000.
- Trails must be open to the public.
- Funding received from other provincial government departments can affect the amount of the grant awarded by CCTH. Provincial government funding cannot exceed 75% of the project's total cost.
- Large equipment purchases and buildings are ineligible.
- The cost to purchase land is ineligible.

Grant Details

- Groups will be informed of the status of their application following the review process.
- A *Terms and Conditions Grant Agreement* will be sent to each successful applicant.
- A grant installment/ payment will be made once the grant agreement is signed and returned.
- CCTH will provide the successful applicant with final reporting documents including a financial statement template and logs for recording donated labour, equipment, and materials.
- If the grant recipient uses donated materials, equipment, and/or labour as part of their contribution, detailed records will be required at the time of final reporting. Samples of logbooks are available.
- Approval of the final report by CCTH enables final grant payment to be made, if applicable.
- Projects must be completed within the indicated fiscal year(s) specified in the Terms and Conditions document.
- *Please Note: supporting documents may be requested at any time throughout the project and for up to four (4) years after project completion.*

OFF-Highway Vehicle Infrastructure Fund (OHVIF)

Program Goals & Eligibility

Funding for riding areas development, design and accessible infrastructure. Up to 50% of costs, usually to \$50,000 per year.

Scoring

- ✓ Authorized users 15pts
- ✓ Other funding sources 10pts
- ✓ Project Description 10pts
- ✓ How the project supports the OHV Trail Network/Riding Areas 15pts
- ✓ How does this project enhance user experience and user safety 10pts
- ✓ Need for the project, how it was identified, and how project align/supports other plans and initiatives within the community and/or the region 10pts
- ✓ How long will this capital investment serve the trail 10pts
- ✓ Sound Financial Management (application form budget) 10pts
- ✓ Pictures 5pts
- ✓ Map 5pts

OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE FUND GUIDELINES



Goals of the OHV Infrastructure Fund (Trails) are:

- to provide funding for OHV trail and riding area development
- to support the planning and design associated with these facilities.
- to provide funding to help maintain OHV accessible infrastructure.

Principles

Principles that guide the OHV Infrastructure Fund (Trails):

- Safe, quality, and environmentally responsible infrastructure that meets the provincial guidelines as outlined in *Developing Recreational Trails in Nova Scotia* - available from www.novascotiatrails.com
- optimizing the use of existing trail infrastructure, to reduce the need for new trail development.
- shared use and management
- avoidance of vulnerable and high conservation value areas and contribution to environmental protection
- encouraging community participation
- value landowner concerns
- partnerships between not-for-profits, governments, landowners, private sector
- sustainability (i.e. maintenance plan, etc.)
- reasonable public access
- to reduce land use conflicts and inappropriate OHV use by establishing approved OHV trails

Eligibility

The following are eligible for OHV Infrastructure Fund (Trails) assistance:

- Not-for-profit groups registered under the *Societies Act* (or equivalent) and in good standing. Not-for-profit groups must be members of either SANS (Snowmobiler's Association of NS), ATVANS (All-Terrain Vehicle Association of NS), NSORRA (NS Off-Road Riders Association) or NS Trails (NS Trails Federation and operating under the policies and principles of that organization)
- Landowners through a not-for-profit organization
- Municipalities

Funding

Applicants may be eligible for funding over more than one year if a multi-year development plan is submitted.

- projects approved for funding are eligible to receive up to 50% of the total project cost, usually not to exceed \$50,000 in one fiscal year.
- Exceptional funding requests may be considered on a case-by-case basis for funding greater than \$50,000 and or more than 50% of the costs due to high overall cash outlay.
- funding to support design, planning, and engineering may be available through the OHV Infrastructure Fund.
- projects involving fittings, buildings, and equipment essential to making the trail and riding area operational are eligible.
- Maintenance work is eligible.
- Groups are eligible to claim in-kind admin for a maximum 10% of requested OHVIF funding to a maximum of \$5,000.



Step-by-Step Funding Process

Step 1 – Read & Review

Thorough Guide Review

Carefully read the 2027-2028 Infrastructure Trail Funding Guide to understand all requirements and steps.

Utilize Application Tools

Use tools like the checklist, in-kind rates, and budget templates to prepare an accurate application.

Engage with Webinars

Join the webinar series running September 2026 through January 2027 for guidance on applications, in-kind logs, forms, social media, fire smarting and wildlife.



2027-2028 INFRASTRUCTURE TRAIL FUNDING GUIDE



Webinar Series – All Sessions at Noon

September 14, 2026 | Need Capital Funding for Your Trail?

Walkthrough of the single application process, with scoring insights and tips.

September 24, 2026 | In-Kind Log, How to Use It!

Corey Robar on logging volunteer time, equipment use and donated materials.

October 1, 2026 | Forms Made Easy

Teresa McNutt on fillable forms, direct deposit and digital signatures.

November 9, 2026 | Stop Talking to a Wall

Shaun Whynacht on growing your group through Facebook, email and your website.

December 10, 2026 | Fire Smarting Trails

David Rockwood on simple ways to reduce fire risk along your trails.

January 14, 2027 | Beavers, Birds, and Turtles, Oh My!

Department of Natural Resources on wildlife guidelines, tips and your questions.



Step 2 – Express Your Interest

Submit Expression of Interest

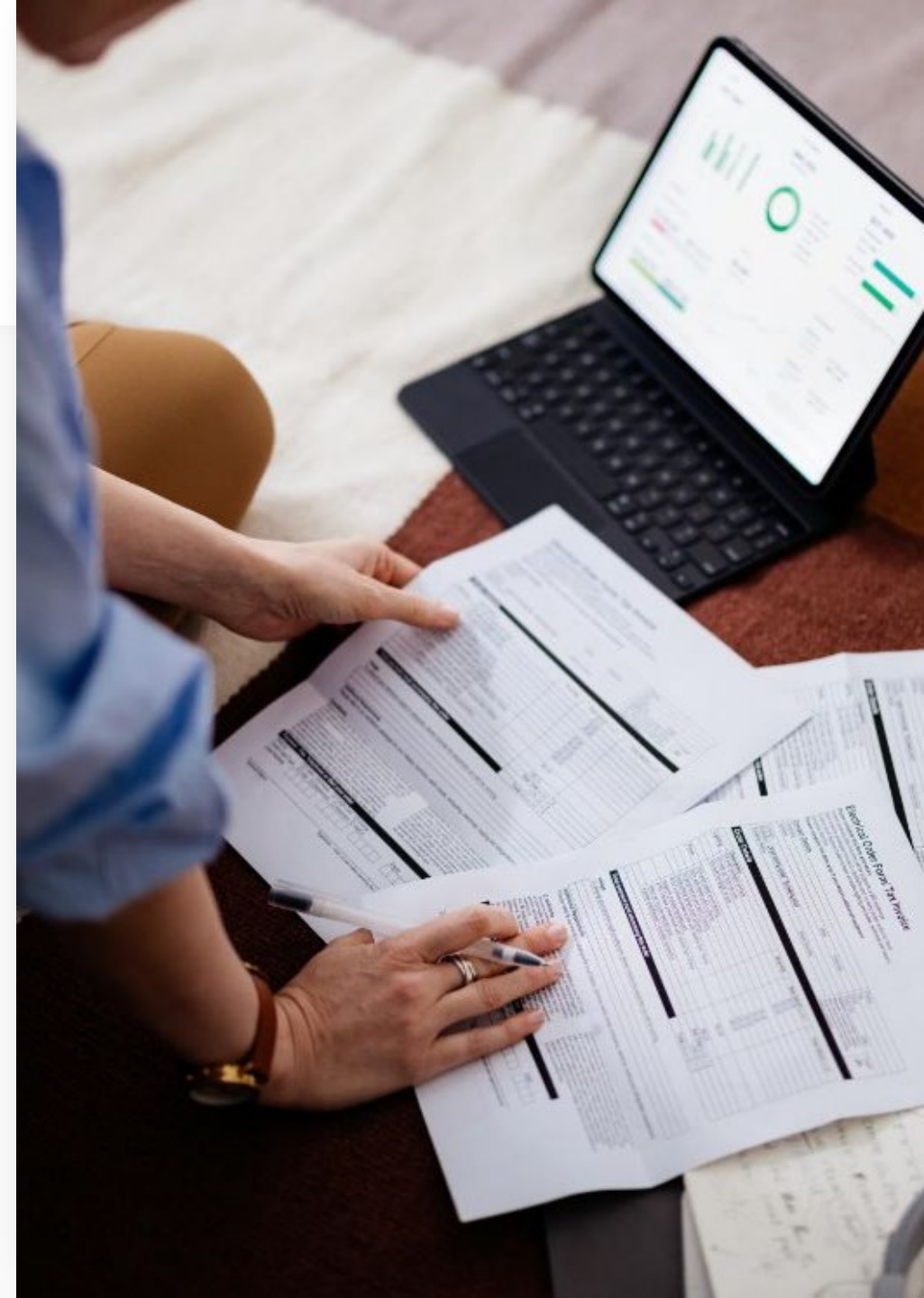
Trail groups must submit a completed EOI form providing an overview of their project to the specified email addresses.

Confirmation and Deadline

Applicants receive confirmation within two business days. Deadline to submit is November 1, 2026 at 11:59 pm.

Importance of Complete EOI

A complete and clear EOI helps reviewers understand the project scope and impact, enabling further evaluation and support.



Step 2 – Express Your Interest

- ✓ Use the name and address listed in Registry of Joint Stocks
- ✓ Include contact people
- ✓ Create a detailed description (sell your project!)

OHVIF

RTE

ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

Organization:		Date:
Organization Mailing Address (include postal code; as listed in the Registry of Joint Stocks):		
Project Title:		
Trail Name (or Route where applicable):		
Project Location Coordinates:	Northing:	Easting:

Organization Contact 1

Organization Contact 2

Name:	Name:
Title:	Title:
Phone:	Phone:
Email:	Email:

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Project Description:

Provide a **detailed** description of the project (where, what the project includes, steps that need to be taken to complete the project, etc.). Please attach before pictures of the work location. Please attach a separate document if more space is required

Step 3 – Intake Meeting

Scheduling the Intake Meeting

Applicants are contacted to arrange a one-on-one meeting via phone, online, or in person with site visit.

Purpose of the Meeting

The intake meeting reviews project details and ensures alignment with funding guidelines. It's also an opportunity for the applicant to ask questions about their project or process.

Next Step

Eligible projects will advance to the application stage .



Step 4 – Submit Application

Submission Deadline

Applications must be submitted by February 1, 2027, at 11:59 pm to be considered for funding.

Submission Methods

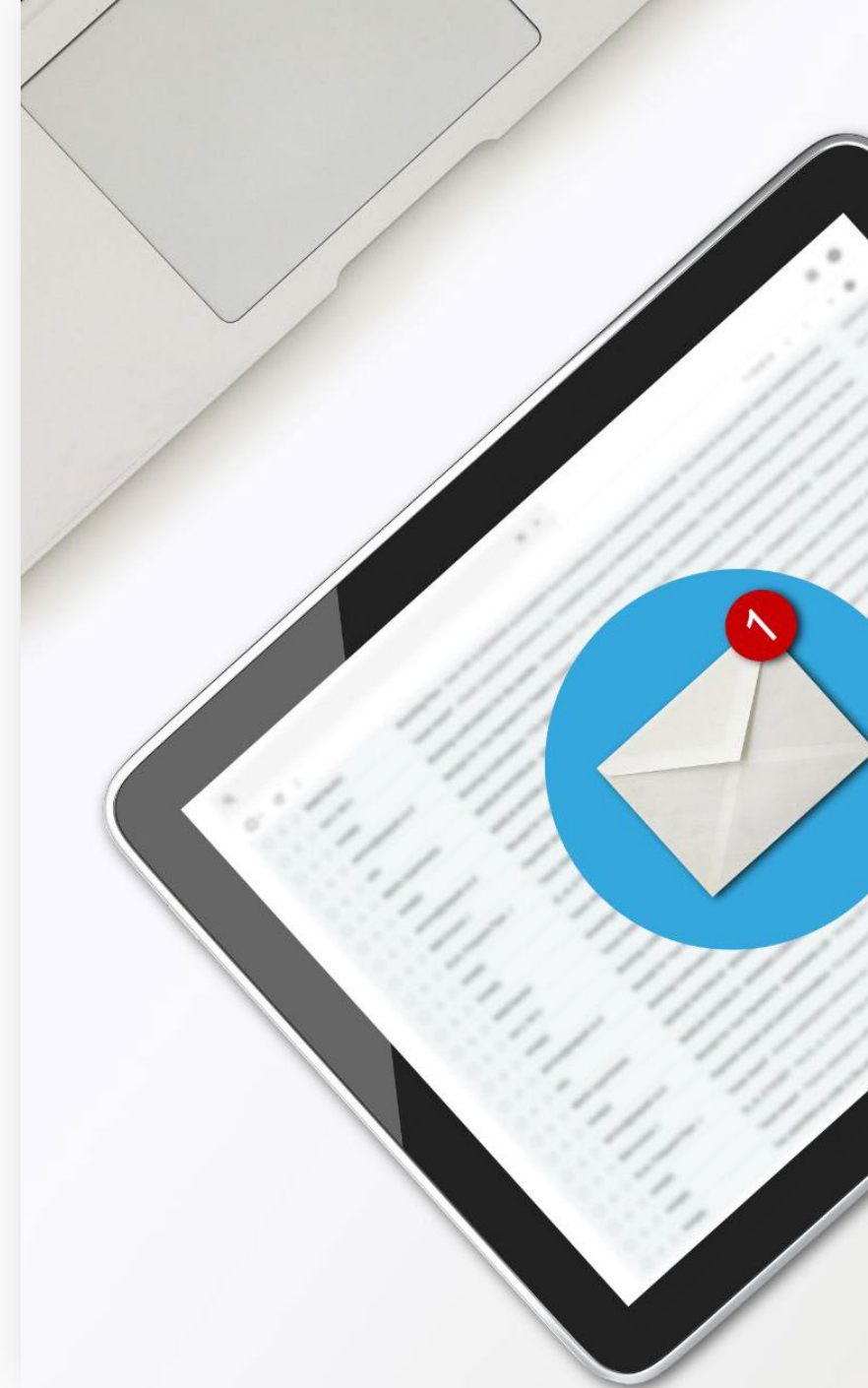
Applications can be emailed or mailed to 80 Walker Street, Suite 1, Truro, NS B2N 4A7; notify us if sent via mail.

Complete Application Requirements

The application must be complete, signed by two authorized officers, and include all supporting documents.

Use of Checklist

Applicants should use the provided checklist to ensure all necessary documents are properly included and formatted.



2026-2027 Infrastructure Trail Funding Application

Please Clearly **PRINT** or **TYPE** and complete the form below and return to:

Once complete, submit by clicking on either address
ccthtailgrants@novascotia.ca - OR - ohvif.application@novascotia.ca
 or mail to
 80 Walker Street, Suite 1 Truro, NS B2N 4A7
Deadline February 1, 2026, 11:59pm

ORGANIZATION INFORMATION		
Organization (as listed on Registry of Joint Stocks):	Registry Joint Stocks #:	
Organization Mailing Address	Postal Code	
Project Title:		
Trail Name (or Route where applicable):		
Project Location Coordinates:	Northing:	Easting:

Project Contact	Alternate Contact
Name:	Name:
Title:	Title:
Phone:	Phone:
Email:	Email:

PROJECT SUMMARY		
Project Summary: (Attach further information as detailed in the Application Checklist on page 7)		
Check all that apply:		
Trail Construction	New Infrastructure Maintenance (<i>For Managed Rail Trail, see Maintenance Funding Application</i>) Reconstruction of Old Existing Route	
Bridge/Water crossings	New	Existing Repair/Upgrade Existing/ Replacement
Vegetation Management	Visibility/Safety	Aesthetics
Signs	New Replacement Regulator	Wayfinding Trail Head Other
Ditching/Drainage	New	Existing Repair/Upgrade Existing/ Replacement
Tread Surfacing	New	Resurfacing Hardening
Environmental Climate Change	Remediation	Mitigation
Accessibility	Fully removes all accessible barriers	Partial removes accessible barriers
Project description - explain in detail the type of work involved in the project and the steps the group will take to complete (if more space is needed, attach another document):		

TRAIL BRIDGES

If no bridge, please check this box

Trail bridges require a qualified engineer. You must submit engineering drawings with your application. The quality of the workmanship used to construct trail bridges must be in accordance with the engineering drawings. For bridges constructed on Crown land, the minimum basis for design and construction are set out in

Step 4 – Submit Application

When submitting the final report, we must have final approval or sign-off from both a qualified engineer and the landowner.

If engineer design/drawings are not provided, please explain why.

Does the bridge provide connectivity in the trail system?

CLIMATE CHANGE

Has there been damage to the property in the past due to coastal flooding or erosion? If yes, please describe.

Is this project located directly in an area at risk of being impacted by coastal flooding or coastal erosion? Coastal Hazard Assessments are now available on request at [Coastal Hazard Assessment Report](#)

If the project may be impacted by coastal flooding and erosion, then are siting, design, or operations measures in place to mitigate the impacts? Briefly describe any measures, including any monitoring plans.

SAMPLE COST BREAKDOWN SUMMARY

Complete the form below or download Excel version

[illegible]

Step 4 – Submit Application

BUDGET SUMMARY

Total Project Value (complete the form below)

must be filled out

\$

Applicant Contribution	Source	Amount	Approved	Pending
Cash Available for Project				
Donated Material				
Donated Labour				
Donated Equipment				
Other (Specify)				

Total Applicant Contribution

\$

Funding from Other Sources (Do not include the amount requested from the OHVIF and RTE Funds)

Agency	Program	Amount	Approved	Pending
Federal				
Provincial				
Municipal				
Trans Canada Trail (TCT)				
Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA)				
Other (specify)				
Other (specify)				

Total Funding from Other Sources

\$

Total Project Funding

(Total Project Funding= Total Applicant Contribution + Total Funding from Other Sources)

Total Project Funding

\$

Total Amount Requested from OHVIF	\$
Total Amount Requested from RTEF	\$
TOTAL Amount Requested	

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESSIBILITY (EDIA)

Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage (CCTH) is committed to ensuring our programs and services are equitable, accessible, and inclusive. Understanding the demographics of our clients and people we serve will help us determine whether our programs, funding allocations, and processes are inclusive of Nova Scotia's diverse communities.

If you are an organization, please identify who your organization serves. If you serve everyone, please select "General population."

General population		
African Nova Scotian	Acadian / Francophone Gaelic / Gaels	Youth (under 19 years)
Persons of African Descent	People living with disabilities	Seniors (65+ years)
Mi'kmaq / Indigenous	Low income	2SLGBTQIA+
Racialized groups / communities	Children in care / transitioning out of care	Gender Diverse
Immigrants / newcomers / refugees	Underhoused / homeless	Men / Boys
		Women / Girls

If not identified above, please specify:

As part of CCTH's commitment to EDIA, we are interested to know if your organization's leadership is reflective of the communities you serve.	Yes
Does your organization's leadership (Board, committee, staff, volunteers, etc.) reflect the communities you serve (language, gender, lived experience or cultural identities, etc).	Somewhat
	No
	Unsure
	N/A

Step 4 – Submit Application

OHVIF & RTE APPLICATION CHECK LIST - please review carefully	
✓	Items should be included in your application or as supporting documents
OHVIF Required Documents; if not submitted at the time of application the file will be considered incomplete and NOT eligible for funding in the 2027-28 fiscal year.	
	▪ Evidence of landowner permissions; private, municipal, or crown land (for Crown LOA first page showing LOA number and last page showing map)
	▪ If the trail project is located on crown land, you must have proof of project approval. Written authorization (email or letter) for the specific project must be provided by either: Department of Environment and Climate Change, Public Works OR Department of Natural Resources
	▪ Letter of endorsement from the associated Provincial OHV/Trail organization (SANS, ATVANS, NSORRA, NS Trails). Demonstrating support for the project, member of good standing and covered by association insurance policy (min \$5,000,000). If you wish to be considered for funding greater than \$50,000 and/or 50% of the costs due to high overall cash outlay
	▪ Proof of liability insurance for a minimum of \$5,000,000, if not included in the endorsement letter
	▪ Project Budget including detailed cost breakdown, projected revenues and sources and all in-kind contributions
	▪ Where applicable, architectural and/or engineering drawings if not included in the contractors' quote
	▪ Two quotes
	▪ Map of appropriate scale showing regional trail network. Identify location of work
RTE Required Documents; if not submitted at the time of application the file will be considered incomplete and NOT eligible for funding in the 2027-28 fiscal year.	
	▪ A letter/email from Municipal staff acknowledging awareness of the applicant, the project, and details of any Municipal involvement regarding funding and/or contribution assistance and how this project connects to municipal priorities.
	▪ Evidence of landowner permissions; private, municipal, or crown land (for Crown LOA first page showing LOA number and last page showing map)
	▪ If the trail project is located on crown land, you must have proof of project approval. Written authorization (email or letter) for the specific project must be provided by either: Department of Environment and Climate Change, Public Works OR Department of Natural Resources
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	▪ Where applicable, architectural and/or engineering drawings if not included in the contractors' quote
	▪ Two quotes
	▪ Map of the trail, identify the work location
OHVIF & RTE if the following supporting documents are provided the group may receive additional points during scoring	
	▪ Before photos showing the specific work location and existing conditions
	▪ If applicable, proof of approval by regulatory bodies and compliance with local by-laws, building codes, trail and riding area construction guidelines. Regulatory bodies may include; Local Municipal Unit, NS Department of Public Works, NS Department of Agriculture, NS Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage, NS Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Navigable Waters - Coast Guard, NS Power

Applicant's Declaration: (Must be signed by two Executive Members of the Organization)

On behalf of, and with the authority of the organization, we certify that the information given in the application for a grant is correct in every respect and that the organization understands the conditions of the Recreational Trail Expansion and Off-Highway Vehicle Infrastructure Fund.

We understand that this information may be shared with CCTH, OHVIF, and other funding partners.

To be signed by two executive members with signing authority.

Title:	Title:
Signature:	Signature:
Date:	Date:

Deadline for Application 11:59 pm February 1, 2026.

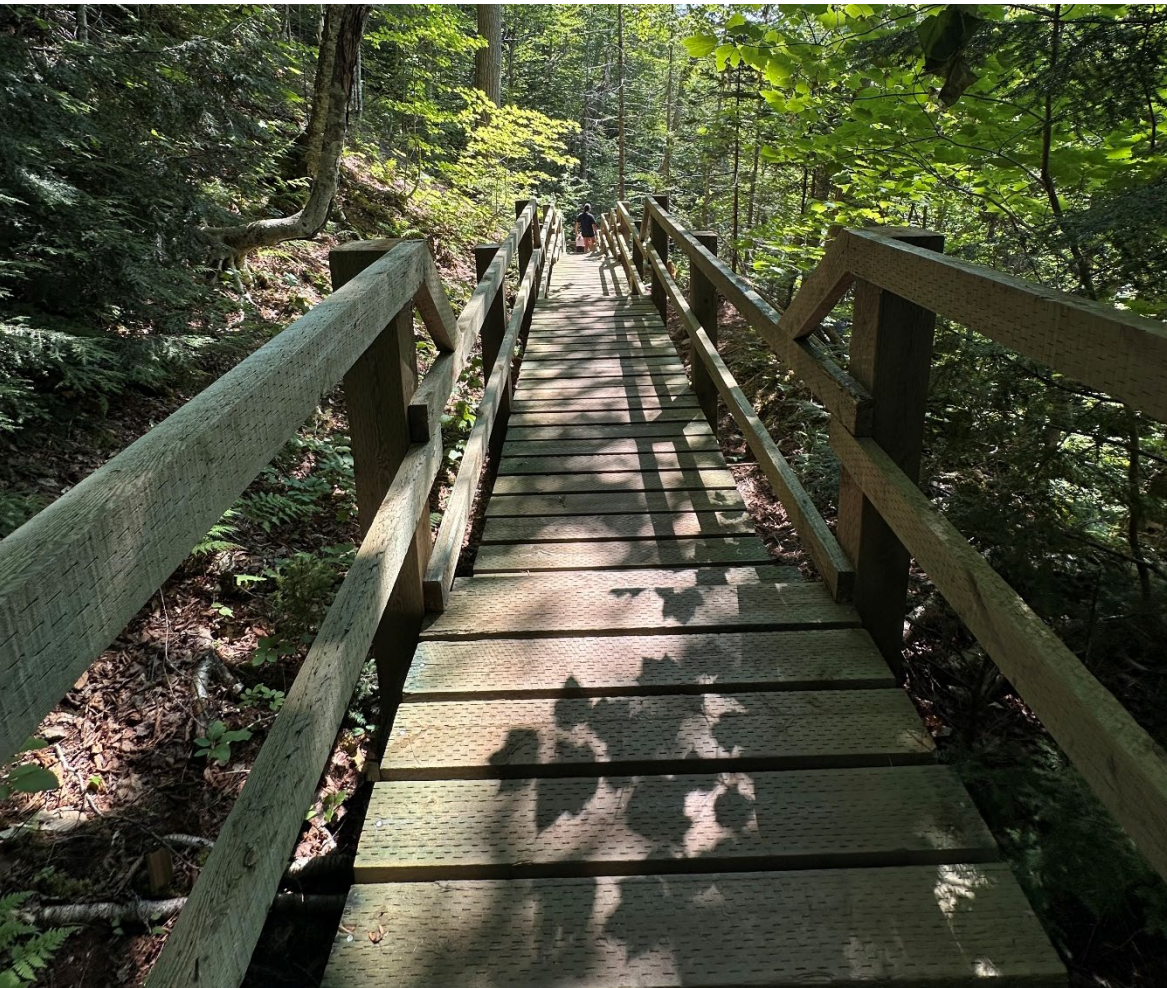
Once complete, submit by clicking on one of these addresses:

ccthtrailgrants@novascotia.ca or ohvif.application@novascotia.ca

Applicants should receive an e-mail confirming that their application was received. If you do not receive this e-mail, please contact ccthtrailgrants@novascotia.ca or ohvif.application@novascotia.ca or 902-324-8392 within two weeks of submission.

Step 4 – Submit Application

Step 5 – Notification & Approval



Funding Decision Timeline

OHVIF Committee announces funding decisions in April 2027; CCTH announcements follow provincial budget approval.

Applicant Notifications

Applicants receive separate notifications for each program's outcome to ensure clear communication.

Reporting Process

If applicants receive both RTE and OHVIF you will be required to submit two separate final reports.

Feedback

Unsuccessful applicants can seek feedback either through email or phone.

Step 7 – Final Report Requirements

Two Reports If Dual Funded

Groups funded by both OHVIF and RTE must submit two separate final reports.

Report the Full Project Value

Include all funding sources, in-kind contributions and donations, not just the grant.

In-Kind & Equipment Logs

Use our log or your own; one log covers both programs and signatures are not required.

Proof of Payment

OHVIF requires all invoices and proof of payment; RTE only records this in the report.

Tell Your Project Story

Share photos and highlights, and keep two people familiar with the project details.





Additional Guidance

Application Checklist

Essential Documentation

Include evidence of landowner permissions, liability insurance, and endorsement letters with your application.

Visual and Project Details

Attach maps, drawings, and before pictures to illustrate the work location clearly.

Comprehensive Budget

Provide a detailed project budget with cost breakdown, revenues, in-kind contributions, and two quotes.

Regulatory Compliance

Submit proof of approval from regulatory bodies and compliance with local by-laws and construction guidelines.

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	▪ Before photos showing the specific work location and existing conditions
	▪ If applicable, proof of approval by regulatory bodies and compliance with local by-laws, building codes, trail and riding area construction guidelines. Regulatory bodies may include; Local Municipal Unit, NS Department of Public Works, NS Department of Agriculture, NS Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage, NS Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Navigable Waters - Coast Guard, NS Power
	▪ Any other supplemental details

Helpful Tips for Submission

Use of Adobe Reader

Applicants should use Adobe Reader to fill forms accurately and utilize provided resources for downloads and signing PDFs.

Consistent File Naming

Save forms using a consistent naming format like '27.28_ApplicantName' to maintain order and identification.

Signature Options

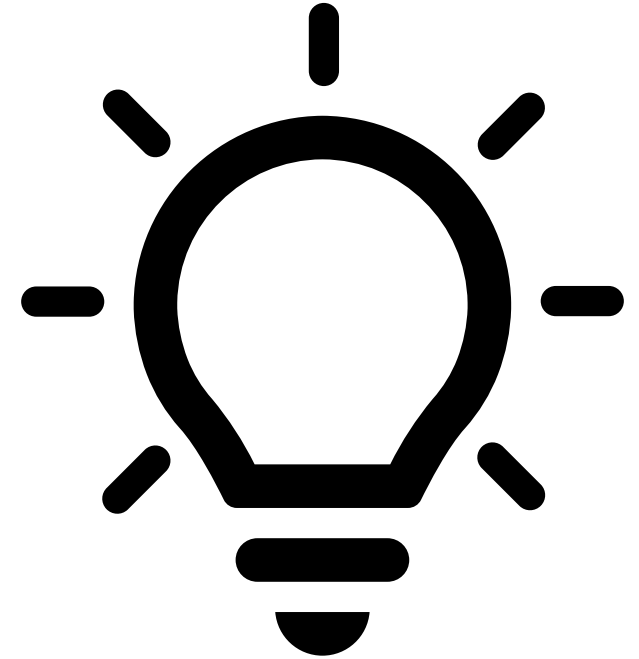
Digital signatures are preferred, but printed and scanned signatures are acceptable to complete the submission process.

Rental Rates & In-Kind Rates

Applicants are encouraged to utilize the Rental Rates for Construction Equipment and the Most Common In-Kind Rates for Donated Labor, Equipment & Materials when completing their budgets.

Complete Application

If the application is not complete it will not move onto the scoring step. Provide all information requested and use the check list. If you submit your application on or before January 18th, 2027, we will review your application to ensure it's complete.



Thank you!

ohvif.application@novascotia.ca
ccthtrailgrants@novascotia.ca

Question?

