



Manitoba Accessibility Fund

Manitoba Accessibility Fund Webinar 2023

Speaker: Charissa McIntosh

For more information, please visit AccessibilityMB.ca

[Webinar Starts]

Charissa McIntosh: So just to begin our session today in a good way. I just want to let everyone know that I'm presenting from my home office space. It's located in Winnipeg, and it's located on treaty one territory.

Many of you in the room today are joining us, or maybe joining us from other treaty areas across the province. I would like to acknowledge that my work with the Manitoba Accessibility Office serves people across Manitoba. Who are located on the treaty territories and ancestral lands of the Anishinaabeg, Anishinewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk. The northern ancestral lands of the Inuit and the Homeland of the Red River Métis.

I'm going to turn my screen off now so that you can focus on the presentation and the interpretation from today. And I would like to continue by just this slide here that you're seeing today is just showing you a little bit of an overview of the presentation.

Now we've divided it into 2 parts. So the first part is going to provide details of the fund of the Grant program, and it covers the topics like program objectives, eligibility, and it will give examples of the project activities.

Now the second part is more of a step back, step, and guide in how to prepare the MAF application, so it will include suggestions of what to have ready when you are writing the application. It will provide financial information. The timelines and the terms, the terms and conditions of the agreement.

Next slide, please. And we'll go to this slide the next slide, too. As well. Please. So, to start, I'd like to share some information about the pilot year of the program which took place last year. So we had a total of 116 organizations that applied last year, which was our pilot year. A majority were the non-profit sector.

Then businesses municipalities, education, institutions, school divisions, and a regional health authority. So of all of the projects there were 93 projects that were assessed, and 23 were ineligible.

Now the majority projects that were considered ineligible was because they were seeking capital funding, and at this time that that is the most important difference between our program and other grant programs is our program does not provide capital funding at this point.

So the majority of applications in terms of geography we're received from Winnipeg, and we did receive 15 applications from rural and from Northern organizations. So there were 30 projects that were selected and received a total of 756,000 in grant funding. So the largest focus in terms of what? What were the activities that people were wanting to do?

The largest focus was on developing accessible training and then holding extensible events. And then the third was conducting websites, but there are also many other projects. There were some that looked at navigation and signage for schools and playgrounds. There was ASL interpretation. There was media campaigns, there were audits, and as well as policies. Could we move to the next slide please?

So in this slide, what we're looking at is the objectives of the program this year. And it's targeting 3. Our 3 accessibility standards. So the first one was customer service, the second is employment, and the third is information and communication, and that's our newest standard. That was introduced on May first of 2022, and it sets the requirements for removing the barriers to information and communication. Electronically, in print and in person.

So I think these objectives are the same as last year. And we wanted to just underline for everyone that this is only the second year of our Grant program. So as new standards are developed. So we have standards for transportation, and we have standards that are for the design of public spaces. And as these are developed and put into force the program, our Grant program is also going to change.

And so right now these are the objectives. So the question you may have is, who is eligible to apply or participate in MAF this year? And so next slide, please. So that what we're seeing is that the eligible organizations this year include businesses, non-profits, municipalities, northern affairs, communities, councils, businesses, and organizations located on reserves, school divisions, universities, colleges, the organizations and the groups that are not eligible to apply to the program are individuals.

It's not meant to be an individual funding for something in your home or something to help you go out in the workspace. So it's not that type of a grant. It is also not eligible for organizations that aren't based in Manitoba. And don't have a priority of delivering services with a focus on Manitobans.

In terms of organizations, it might operate nationally, but the project that you're applying for must be something that you're going to be delivering and of a benefit directly to Manitobans. Also ineligible are organizations that are not open to the public. So private clubs and such it's not open to private residences, so like a private privately owned dwelling or an apartment, and such.

And it's not open to crown corporations. And so I'm goanna pause now and invite anyone who might have an initial question around the presentation so far. So I'd invite you to open, turn on your chat or raise your hand, and I will be able to answer.

Question: Where can I find the list of the recipients of the funding from the previous years?

Response: Of course. Yeah, it's on the accessibilityMB.ca website. And there's a news release. That lists, has an attachment that lists everything as well as there is a section. If you were to go into events. There's the fund like the MAF page, and then there is a there is at the bottom of the page. There is a line that says award, recipients, or grant recipients, and then it will list out all of the recipients. But if you wanted to also write us an email, we can send that information to you.

Question: If you are accepted for a grant this year, can you apply for a future grant years when more laws are put into place?

Response: The answer is, yes. At this time there is no limitation on organizations applying for a grant. The only stipulation we have. Is one application per intake period. So you can submit one application on behalf of your organization.

But several organizations might come together and work together on a project. You can be listed as a partner on several applications. But yes, there is no limits for applying each year for projects. We just ask that the projects are new.

Question: I'm the board chair of a small ecological non-profit here in Manitoba, friends of the Living Prairie Museum. We are looking to fund captioning services for our public presentation events. Is this something that might be eligible for the grant?

Response: The answer is, yes, that would fit, because it is a service and accessibility service that would remove barriers. So I would say yes, that would fit.

Question from chat: Can churches apply for the grant?

Response: Yes, if your church is considered to be a non-profit organization, the focus of all projects, and I will stress, this needs to be on the accessibility. Of what you're offering to whatever membership clientele to Manitobans. And so that is the purpose and the core around which your project needs to focus on, what the project needs to look at. And this is what we'll be getting into in the next section of our presentation.

Question: Are our member based organizations who provide services to the public eligible?

Response: Yes, they are.

Question: And then what is the total amount of funding available?

Response: This year it is \$50,000. Is the maximum amount of funding so it's up to \$50,000 is the maximum amount of funding. So it's up to \$50,000.

Question: We are opening an accessible farm. Does that mean we are not eligible?

Response: Businesses are eligible, so if it is a business, you are operating, then you would qualify.

Question: What is the total funding in the pool?

Response: The total funding is approximately \$750,000. That is what we had for last year, and it is the investment from an endowment Grant that was provided to the Manitoba to the Winnipeg foundations.

So in 2021, the government of Manitoba gave 20 million dollars to the Winnipeg Foundation, and so every year we have just approximately 1 million dollars to spend for Grant program. Both the grant and the Administration.

Question: Do community clubs in Winnipeg qualify?

Response: Yes, yes, you would be able to apply because you were considered as non-profit organizations. And if municipality receives funding, does the labor have to be internal or external, that would be related to project costs? And we'll get that. Get to that question as well a little bit later in the presentation.

So I'm going to continue now, and you may have other questions, but we'll get to that we'll get to that as we proceed. Could we go to the next slide? Please? So I'm just gonna start looking a little bit at ineligible activities. And so these activities would be, as I said before, projects occurring outside of Manitoba. We will not fund those. And again, really important. We will not at this time we're not going to be funding any renovations affecting buildings that are specified in the Manitoba Building Code, and those ones probably we will be revisiting as our new system come into play.

So the transportation standard and the accessibility design of outdoor spaces, but that will be in the next 2 year period. At the moment the province does have a grant program called Building Sustainable Communities. That is, through the Municipal Relations. The department of Municipal Relations, and I would invite you to go to their website (Manitoba Grants Online) because they do fund capital projects related to accessibility. And as well, there is Federal government program that does fund capital projects related to accessibility and their funding is called the Enabling Accessibility Fund. So I would I would invite you to go to those two opportunities for that type of funding.

Another important piece is that the MAF grant does not fund ongoing operational costs or programs. So if it's regular business regular programs, operating funding, we don't fund that through our grant. It's meant to really be a Project grant for a year project. So it so it makes sense that we don't fund core or essential services that are basically the responsibility of another of a municipal or provincial or federal body.

If you're if you're getting funding for that as well, we do not also fund any projects that are linked to the delivery of core education, health and social service programs that are delivered through provincial or federal funding, and we do not fund any projects that are related to private, residential, wage subsidies, any placement programs, or employee assistance programs.

So our program is not meant to top up wages in any way. So just think about it like you have a project, and you want to. You can definitely hire a consultant internally or externally, you can include project staff or hire project staff to do the work, but it's for the project. And in context of this project so I'd invite you to move to the next slide.

Okay. So now we're going to get into a few of the examples of our eligible activities. And so we're going to go through each of these objectives that we have. And just give you some ideas to get your juices flowing and think about what kind of activity might work for you. So these are going to be examples, just giving you an idea of what might be what might be an eligible activities.

So in terms of raising awareness about prevention and removal of barriers. This example is a construction companies hiring employees with disabilities, including people who are deaf and hard of hearing. It's consulting with employment agencies and disability organizations about accommodations in the sector. It does research about best practices. So the project, the impact is going to be seen by sharing best practices with the construction sector next slide.

So in this example, it's identifying an employment agency. And they wish to promote the disability, employment awareness month, and they would like to promote the accessible employment standard through a social media campaign as well as delivering a free webinar with tips about accessible hiring. Next slide please.

In this example. It's actually a project that is happening currently. And it's a school division that is removing barriers by putting up communication board on their playground. So children who are using adaptive communication technologies can participate more freely during outdoor break. So that's those are some examples under the first objective of removing barriers.

Now we'll move to our next slide, which is looking at what are some activities to look at tools, resources, vents, and training to support compliance. So in these two examples, we're looking at projects that are being undertaken by non-profit organizations and they both have chosen to develop resources, visual aids, and tools to bring awareness of accessibility features either during an event or for helping people with communication disabilities to access, police legal correction and court services.

So in this example, it's showing you again, some ideas around tools and resources and events. So the first one is a post secondary institution. And this is actually happening there this year. They're continuing a digital accessibility audit. Of their new website. And they're providing training opportunities for their staff to develop accessible educational content. And they're also planning to review and upgrade their main library database systems to improve accessibility and usage.

Another example which is actually a project that's underway as well, is seeking to create a centralized web portal at a municipality, to inform the public about disruptions in access to facilities, services and programs. So this portal would be designed to provide user customized notifications about service disruptions.

So in these next couple of examples are looking at our accessibility standards for removing barriers to information and communication. So the first example includes a municipality who's reviewing all of their information, their promotional materials, communication materials, and their web content for accessibility. In the second activity. It's actually an activity that's happening this year. And it's a project that's producing a series of ASL videos for their build a better business start-up training program to provide Manitobans who are deaf with access to business education videos, online.

And so this slide has some more examples of what types of projects we can do for moving various information and communication. And so when very important area would be projects that look at designing, updating existing websites to improve accessibility. So the digital enhancements, any digital enhancements about content and about websites now need to be in accordance with the WCAG 2.1 level double A standards.

So if this is an area that your organization is very interested in, then yes, you are permitted to hire a consultant to do a functional audit and provide training to increase capacity for your organization, to create accessible documents and online content.

Another other projects might be creating tip sheets, best practice guides. How do you use technology, accessible technology and other web accessibility features? So I'm going to pause again and just invite questions about any of this information about eligible or in eligible project activities.

So it looks like we've had some questions coming in through the chat. So I'll start

Question from chat: are we required to submit a match to the grant? If we ask for 50,000, does it need to be 100,000 project?

Response: So the answer to the question is, no, this is another difference between this Grant program and the building sustainable Communities Grant program for us. We will provide up to \$50,000. So if you're project is beyond that amount, then we would invite you to let us know the total project costs. But there is no requirement for matching funds.

Question from chat: we are adding an outdoor place, space that will focus on accessibility. We are a child care center. Would that be covered?

Response: That one we would need to have further details because the focus is would not be on the physical aspect of it. It would need to be things like, you know, navigation or signage, or a campaign to invite more understanding around, like to parents around what makes the space accessible. But the actual physical upgrades would not be part of this would not be accessible.

Question: Our presentation series is held yearly between January to March, and we have occasional events throughout the year.

Response: You would be eligible you would be able to apply to the grant. The period of when the project would need to take place is between April first of 2023, and it would end on March thirty-first of 2024.

Question: Will the slides of the presentation be shared?

Response: Yes, we will be posting this presentation online, and that should be within the next couple of days, where just we're getting it finalized. So I would say, it's going to be up before the end of the week.

Question: Does fund cover built environment pieces if they relate to information of communication. For example, wayfinding for existing a new developed spaces.

Response: Yes, that's correct. It would so yes, you can submit an application for that.

Question/Comment: A lot of examples are for Deaf community but do you also fund projects for people with visual impairment? Would this type of project qualify?

Response: Yes, definitely, it would. We just included examples of actual projects underway, because we thought that that might help folks when they see a concrete example. But of course they're just examples.

Question: Are the outcomes of Grant being shared in a Resources library such as the outcome of the Best Practice Guides?

Response: I will have to take a look. That's a great idea. Yes, that is something that we will be definitely looking at for future. As I said, it's just the second year, so we are still growing and learning. So stay tuned for that one.

Question: How do we find out about consultants let's say, to assist with website functional audits.

Response: I would say the first thing to do is to connect with your own website, designer and developer. And see and ask them about their capacity for accessibility, because this is something that we would encourage all designers and developers to become more able to include accessibility at the beginning development, but in terms of consultants, I would invite you to write me an email and we can chat further about that.

Question: Does the grant cover the actual design of a website that is consistent with the new standards, or only the functional audit and training?

Response: Yes, we have funded projects this year (2022/23) that include a full review of a website. Yes, a project could include the full redesign of a new website or a refresh or revamp. So yeah, the answer is, yes.

Question: Could a project be eligible if we wanted to add closed captioning described video and ASL to existing videos.

Response: Yes, it would. You can apply and add that to an application.

Question: Our organization has a vehicle to bring folks with barriers to our mental health programs. Would that be eligible at this time or would it need to be funded through the municipalities, buildings, building, sustainable development, or the Federal Grant program?

Response: As I said earlier, once our transportation standard has been developed, we'll be reassessing that aspect. We'll need to see how we can support organizations to meet the requirements of all our accessibility standards. And so that piece might be looked at for in the future. Once that standard on accessible transportation has been enacted.

Question: Our pilot program needs funding for accessibility and sensory tools, such as transfer belts, filter, field, fidget, tool, sensory swings. Would that be eligible? Considering needs will depend and be based on the needs of different children.

Response: That's a great question. I would invite you to write me an email, and we'll discuss that a little further.

Question: Would life skills facilitators to provide staff with skills development, and support, be eligible?

Response: I would invite you to write me as well. It would depend on the context of it. And this is something that is an ongoing activity from your organization. Or if this is a specific one-time project, focus to raise awareness around the accessibility standards or deal with a particular standard.

Question: Can this grant cover artists, music, concerts, and mobilizations about disabilities?

Response: We did support an event through the art accessibility, accessibility, network of Manitoba, and that did include several different mediums of art. So I would say that an event would be eligible for this.

Anyone else have a question at this moment a burning question or I'm going to now move forward.

Question: We're upgrading our alarm sound system, would vibrating devices be eligible for this grant?

Response: That's a great question. I would invite you to write me an email just because I think it might delve into the realm of the building code, and it would depend on what Manitoba's Building Code guidelines are and what sort of the standards are around that so it might be one of those questions where it might be considered as a physical upgrade.

We don't typically fund equipment at the moment unless it's directly related to information and communication. As I said, the navigation, this signage, are fine, the technology. So one of our libraries this year purchased iPad and E Readers for children. One of our faith-based organizations purchased technology to help their community to be able to attend all the programs and services that they had. But in terms of sound systems, and such I would need to I'd need to look into that a little further.

So let's move on. If we could move to the next slide, please. So this is going into a little bit of the funding which we had some questions already so the maximum grade in this year 2324 is 50,000, and basically, in 2022 a lot of the applicants that we did fund a requested list, and so we were able to support 30 organizations. And as someone had asked, you can see the recipients on our under our MAF funding page.

So the information about the program and then at the bottom, it does list out the recipients. So, and you can also request up to 10% of your proposed budget to cover administrative costs, and as we discussed organizations can submit one application each intake, and then they can also work with others and be listed as a partner on other applications, so a very simple example is several of our projects listed echo for their ASL interpretation services on their on that in 2023 the one of the differences is that we're asking that you prepare your proposed budget on a specific form.

And we're asking that you include your total project costs as well as what it is that you're requesting from the MAF Grant. So some projects are quite large, and you might only be requesting a portion of the grant from the MAF. But other projects. They don't have any extra costs, and all of the project has been is being included in the request from MAF. So this is just an excel sheet that we've created, and that excel sheet needs to be submitted and attached to your application form.

So if we can move to the next slide, please. So in terms of what are these eligible and ineligible costs? So the eligible cost would be this salaries for your project, staff and consultants, it would be project for any project or resource. Promotions for any translation costs into ASL or other languages.

So things that are ineligible. As we were talking about earlier, so the general operating costs to maintain and operate your own organization are not included. Building renovations, such as ramps or automatic door openers would not be included, and things like furniture, including the accommodations for the employees, like the big physical assets, would not be included, and so if you're looking for sort of a more complete list we have that in the guidelines document, and that's also available on the website.

If we could move to our next slide. So this slide is looking at. What are we looking at when we're selecting our projects for this year? And so we're going to be looking over the next 2 slide at the various criteria and that this selection committee will be looking at in terms of applications to help determine which projects are being recommended.

So basically every year, we have a selection committee and we prioritize that our selection committee is people who have self-identified as having a disability. They're civil servants. And these recommendations list of recommended projects go to the minister responsible for the accessibility. It is Honorable, Rochelle Squires, and she is the minister also of the Department of families. So that is part of the reason why the work is situated within the office. The Manitoba Accessibility Office, which and we sit and are located within the Department of Families.

In the application form what you'll see is, there is a question that relates to each of these selection criteria, and you'll be asked to describe or provide details about how your project will address each of these areas. So the first one is eligibility. And so it's that your project meets all the eligibility criteria, and you've completed all the application requirements by the deadline, and that you're showing that your project is supporting one or more of the objectives that we were talking about.

So the removing of barriers and meeting the guidelines for support and compliance, or raising awareness. One thing is, if you are an organization that did receive a MAF grant for a project last year, you are able to apply again. If it is a new project, request the second area is capacity.

This criteria looks at how does your organization have the ability to administer, manage, and oversee the project? Do you have available human and financial resources to conduct the project? And do you? Does your organization show a commitment to accessibility? So what are you doing? How? What have you done to address accessibility?

The third area is basically looking at your work, plan your budget and the results. So have you outlined and described clear steps within reasonable timelines and budget. Do you identify reasonable results, and how you're going to be evaluating it?

So these criteria are inclusion, and this is asking, have you integrated the expertise of Manitobans disabled by barriers in the project in some way? Are you including them in this development delivery, evaluation at every step? And will your project engage with a significant number of people and our organizations? And how are you collaborating and working with others, and engaging with others.

The next criteria is impact, and it's looking at. Will your project, enhance awareness of accessibility and support, compliance with the accessibility for Manitobans Act? Will your project benefit a significant number of people, or serve as a model for other organizations? Does your project target an underserved population or region? What is the impact of the project? That that you can identify and describe, and then other considerations depending on how many applications can come in. We're hoping that we get lots of applications, because there are lots of great ideas out there.

Priority is going to be given to projects that demonstrate innovation that they respond to needs and promote accessibility, that they're sustainable. And so now I'm going to pause again for some further questions, because we're going to move on to our next section, which is all about sort of how to complete the application so I'm going to go back to some of the questions that have come in.

Question: Do you have the application forms in French, or does it have to be in English?

Response: Yes, we do have the application forms in French. The whole package is available on the French version of the Manitoba Accessibility Office website. So that's AccessibilityMB.ca, and so you'll just go to the French side and look at the page for MAF. That AccessibilityMB.ca.

As well we have the information about this Grant program listed on the Manitoba Grants Online website in both French and English. So if that's an easier place for you to access information, then I would invite you to go there as well.

Question: Will the purchase of hearing loop technology, whether mobile or install, be eligible for funding?

Response: I would invite you to write me about that question. Depends. If it's for an individual specifically or for a larger purpose. Or I need a little more context on that.

Question: What do we consider as administrative costs?

Response: Well, those would be administrative costs to actually do the work. So any postage costs, any supplies, any cell bills, anything that you would typically consider to be an administrative, and not a production cost.

If you're doing an event it would be the fees for the sort of the the organization is spending behind the scenes to actually create, to run, or to fulfill the project. So supplies, if there's any, printing costs, but those ones can also come under resource production. So again, if you have any specific questions, I would ask you to email me.

Question: Do we need to spend the full amount that is requested? For example, if the ballpark quote, we receive from a consultant is more than the costs end up being.

Response: At the application stage, it is an estimated budget, but once, and if your project is successful, you will have an opportunity to revise your budget. But it does need to be reasonable, because once the contribution agreement, which is a document that is signed by both the minister and members of your organization that becomes our guideline document, and we will need to provide consent for any major budget changes.

If there are any major changes to the budget, the simple answer is, if you do not spend your full amount, then yes, you would need to reimburse it to the province. If the amount goes up above and beyond the amount you have received through your contribution agreement, then we would not be paying, and we would not top up your agreement. No, that would be up to your organization to find those funds. So you do need to spend the full amount, or you would lose that amount.

Question: Would a closed captioning system for a movie theater owned run by municipality qualify to apply?

Response: Short, answer is, yes this project would be eligible.

Question: Is there someone to assist in the application process? This is our first time doing an application for a grant.

Response: I would invite you to contact me by email, and we can go step by step through the application process beyond today's session. If you have any further questions, so any other burning questions, or we will now move to the next session. My email address, which I'm going to provide to everyone is M like mother, A like apple, F like Frank at G.O.V.mb.ca, so that's MAF@gov.mb.ca, so next slide, please.

And so we're going into our next half, which is looking at. How do we submit an application? Could we go to the next slide? So this one is just giving you a snapshot of what it looks like for the application form. When you click on the link to apply. It's a form that we're using smart sheet. And so the biggest thing about that is smart sheet. There's not a save button, so we would invite you to prepare a word version of your document, and then just add the content into the electronic application, and then finish to press submit.

Next slide, please. So to help you get ready and prepare your application. We would ask you to kind of organize and get some pieces of information together, which is going to just make the application process go. Much smoother. And so what we need is your full legal organization your business name, the contact person. So the contact is not need to be your CEO or your board chair, or your CFO, or whatever it just needs to be. The main person who will be our contacts, whichever it just needs to be. The main person who will be our contact throughout the throughout this process we're going to need your at organization. Your business telephone, your email, your website address. If you have one. One of our criteria that all applicants need to at least have their organization be a year in operation, so it needs to show that you've been in operation since January 30th, 2022 or earlier. And depending on what type of if you're a non-profit what type of non-profit, you are, then you might need to provide your charity number. If you're a business you would need to provide your business number. The proposed timeline of the project. As I mentioned, all projects must be completed by March 31st, 2024. We would like a very short description of the organization.

If your organization is an Unincorporated non-profit, then there is a section on the questionnaire that will just ask you to tell us about it.

We're just looking for a really high, level, overview summary of information that addresses the mandate and purpose of your organization. And its main activities. So if you're writing from a very large organization, you may just want to focus on the division or the area of the department that is initiating the project.

So in terms of the organization description, we'd also like you to describe your previous experience in addressing accessibility, such as, Have you done staff training to have you completed any of the accessibility modules, or the act? So those are very useful. And also we would like a description of the project team and what skills they bring next slide. Oh, sorry. We also would like a project name and a project so just a little bit about the actual project that you want to achieve and link that back to one or more of the projects that you want to achieve. And link that back to one or more of the project now next slide please.

So this slide also identifies information that is requested about the project itself, and how it will meet the criteria that we're asking for when we select projects. And it's looking at the work plan, the budget, results, inclusion, and impact so we're asking that you're application talk about how your project is going to address each of these criteria.

So under detailed proposals, work plan. So its identifying activity timelines expected results. How are you going to measure or evaluate the project in terms of inclusion? What are the partnerships, or how are you including voices of people with disabilities. What, in terms of at what stages, how are these voiced experiences of people with disabilities being included or involved, whether it's at the development planning, delivery or as participants of an activity or an event in terms of the impact.

As I was explaining, we want to look at you know, how are you enhancing awareness. And how are you supporting compliance with the AMA and the standards. Who's going to benefit from the project, and how and how is your project affecting specific, demographic, or all Manitobans? And if it's help, a specific demographic, how is it helping them? The groups that face additional barriers.

In terms of the next slide. I want to talk about a little bit about the budget form. What we'd like you to do is to provide your information in dollars and we'd like you to provide the estimated costs. We'd like you to use the template to list the

total costs of the project as well as the costs that are requested from the Grant program. And, as I said, matching funds are not required, and then we've provided this as an Excel sheet, and you'll be attaching it to your online application form.

We'll move to the next slide. So now we're getting to the point in the process where, okay, we've selected the projects. What does it look like? So the way that we provide the payment is each grant recipient, once we have a fully signed contribution agreement. The organizations receive 90% of the approved funding. So 10% of the funding is retained as a final payment, and that is made upon the receipt and acceptance of the final project.

The reporting obligations for this grant is basically a short narrative report, and your financial statement of revenue and expenses and basically it's looking at your contribution agreement, or if you've had an amendment to it because your budget is changed or your activities have changed. Then it's looking at that and demonstrating how the money basically was spent. And once we receive that final report, then we will issue the final payment of 10%.

We want to give you majority of the funding so that you're able to actually complete the project during the year, and just want to also note that projects may be subjected to an audit, so that you're aware of that.

Next slide, please. You may be asking yourself, what does the Contribution Agreement look like? What does it include? So it's basically our formal contract and it covers the acceptable use of funds. It looks at the project, start and end date. It provides the payment schedule like I said, the 90% and the 10% it covers the reporting requirements so that it has a schedule that actually provides you with what does the grant report the final report look like as a template.

It provides information about our communications protocol. All of our recipients are basically asked to and invited to basically participate in a launch. It talks about how to recognize the province as a funder of the project of the activities that you're doing and obtaining permission in advance to use the provincial logo and such. If you are creating materials that are that are going to be publicly used. And also it looks at the conflict of interest, policy, and the guidelines.

So basically the bottom line with the contract, the contribution agreement it is that if there are any major changes to any activities during the year, any budget changes or if there's a big change to your organizational structure then you'll need to notify myself and our team and we'll need to add that amendment, and provide that consent for your project to continue.

So the next slide is going to cover the timelines of what to expect. The MAF Grant program is aligned as much as possible to the Government's fiscal year, which I know is very different than fiscal years of other sectors. MAF projects will run from April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024. This year's application intake closes on March 10th. So I think there's about 3 or 4 more weeks for you to apply, and all applications are going to be notified of approval or non-approval in May. So we need about 6 to 8 weeks.

The Selection Committee will submit the recommendations of the list of grant recipients to the minister responsible for accessibility, and then, once the minister provides her approval, then we will be replying to everyone, both the successful and non-successful applicants, but everyone is informed of the decisions. So you'll be getting a letter or an email. And, as I said, because they're projects of a one year term, the projects need to be completed by March 31st, 2024.

Next slide, please. Now I'm sure that everybody is super excited because a majority of your projects are eligible, ready to go, and so how do you do this? So we would invite you to first download adobe reader on your computer then I would invite you to visit the accessibilityMb.ca/fund.html web page to download our MAF guidelines and the application preview to consult with stakeholders and developing to your project, and then to collaborate to look at, to access, expertise and expanding your project impact.

And then, as I said, just to remind you to create a draft version of your application in word and use that as your base when you're completing the online application form. And so basically, as I said, it's easier to transfer information that way. So we have talked to smart sheets, and we're asking them about that, you know, creating the save function. But they haven't yet added it to their platform. And so next slide, please.

And basically we would definitely ask you to reach out to me, to my team at any time. We really hope to read about all the exciting initiatives that your organizations would like to implement that you're already implementing to improve awareness and break barriers and support services for people with disabilities across Manitoba.

What I'm going to be doing now is open it back up for questions for the next period, and, as I said, we'll be sharing this presentation. If you would like a copy of the presentation sooner than the end of the week then please send us an email, and we will email it to you right away.

Question: Someone's asking where to find the excel sheet.

Response: It's actually on the same, the same web page as all the information, with all of the background documents. So if you go to the web page called fund our MAF Fund web page, there's a section called Apply to MAF, and that has both the budget Excel sheet as well as the link to the application form.

Question: I work in a unique organization where I can see us implementing projects in recruiting, marketing, education, would we just strategize on which one would be the best project? Or would we submit one for each potential project?

Response: I would say that this is a question for your group to explore, because we do accept only one project per organization.

And so in that case. It's really up to your organization to decide if you want to do pieces of different ideas and different aspects of initiatives, or whether you want to focus on one specific initiative this year and then apply at the next intake to look at a different initiative, as I said we're we don't limit, every organization can apply each year. So that would be a little bit of work internally for your organization to decide which one might be the best, because we would not accept multiple project submissions or similar applications from one organization.

I think I already spoke about the budget excel sheet you can submit two project ideas in an application as two parts of a project.

At this time, we are not able to accept 2 separate project applications from one organization.

If the proposed projects are under the full amount available (i.e. combined total of less than \$50k) then yes, you could submit different ideas for the different initiatives within one project submission.

Comment: It would be nice to have a word template for a draft as guidance.

Response: We can provide you with that. So if you could email me, we can provide you with a word plate for that, for the application form. Once the web application form in Word is ready we will put online.

Question: Do you know if there are word or character limits on the online form?

Response: We did have them, and people asked us to take them off. No, I don't believe that there are any word limits at this point, so you can write away all as much as you want. But, please, it's not meant to be a thesis. It's just meant to provide some just a brief description, and in such a way you're doing so.

Question: Can a project cover a website audit website, design and improvement training, ASL in one project?

Response: Yes, it can.

Any further questions that anyone might have at this point, or I would invite you to write our, as I said, connect with me by the email. We will be posting the recording. We'll be posting as well the word version of the application form as a template that you can, that you can take a look at and complete to help you with the online version through SmartSheet. I thank you very much for your participation today, and I hope you have a wonderful rest of the day.

[Webinar Ends]