

YOUTH CLIMATE ACTION GRANTS

Application Guide for 2023

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ABOUT THIS GUIDE: This application guide will help you apply for the Youth Climate Action Grants. Please read these guidelines to ensure your group and project are eligible for funding. The Youth Climate Action grants support the City of Toronto's TransformTO climate action strategy and target to reduce community-wide greenhouse gas [GHG] emissions to net zero by 2040. Applicants are encouraged to review the City's [TransformTO Net Zero Strategy](#), and the [TDSB Youth Climate Action Guide](#), which offers resources and tips to help students implement climate action initiatives that are responsive and sensitive to the needs of their communities.

Introduction

The City of Toronto has an ambitious Net Zero Strategy to address the climate emergency and accelerate the reduction of community-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to net zero by 2040. Toronto's 2040 target is one of the most ambitious in North America.

Achieving net zero emissions will require transformational changes in how we live, work, and travel. The goal is to get GHG emissions as close to zero as possible, with any remaining emissions compensated for by removing an equivalent amount of carbon from the atmosphere. Everyone in Toronto can play a role in reducing GHG emissions, including youth.

The Youth Climate Action Grants (YCAG) support student-led projects, activities and events that directly or indirectly (through education/outreach) reduce GHG emissions. For 2023, YCAG will begin as a pilot program that is offered only to TDSB student-led groups. In the coming years, we hope to include other Toronto school boards.

Highlights

- Up to \$1,000 is available per project
- Funding is for project ideas inspired by student-led groups
- Student-led groups are made up of 2 or more students (Kindergarten through Grade 12), who currently attend a TDSB school
- Student-led groups must also have a TDSB staff member who will serve as your project supervisor
- Applications must be approved by the school's principal
- There is no limit to the number of grant applications per school as long as the applications are from different student-led groups and classrooms
- Project applications must be unique ideas
- Priority will be given to grant projects that will be completed by the end of the current school year

Learn more

What are greenhouse gases?

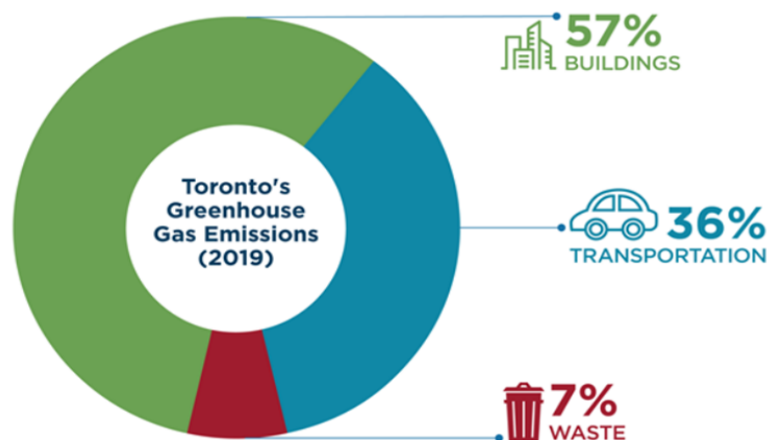
Greenhouse gases (GHGs) such as carbon dioxide (CO₂) and methane (CH₄) are necessary to keep our planet warm enough to sustain life. However, in excessive quantities, they prevent heat from escaping the earth's atmosphere. This causes the earth to heat up, leading to consequences such as a higher frequency of extreme weather events. Increased GHG emissions from human activities, such as burning fossil fuels, are primarily responsible for climate change.

TransformTO Net Zero Strategy

To reach net zero emissions by 2040, we must:

- transition away from fossil fuels to clean, renewable energy;
- reduce the energy we use to heat and power our homes and other buildings;
- change the ways we move around the city; and
- reduce waste, including food waste.

Everyone can help to reduce the emissions that contribute to climate change. To learn more about Toronto's ambitious climate action strategy, visit [Let's TransformTO Together](#).



The largest source of GHG emissions in Toronto are: homes and buildings, transportation and waste.

Grant Objectives

Proposed projects must satisfy one or both of the following objectives:

1. Directly contribute to GHG emissions reduction in Toronto.
2. Educate students, families and/or community members about actions they can take to reduce GHG emissions.

Priority Projects

The City will give priority to projects that:

- involve collaboration between students and parents/guardians, teachers, and the community;
- support or enhance teaching/learning about climate change;
- take place in one of Toronto's [Neighbourhood Improvement Areas](#); and
- will be completed before the end of the current school year.



Key Dates 2023-24

Stage – Spring Round	Dates
Applications open	February 1, 2023
Applications deadline	May 31, 2023
Funding decisions announced	June 2023
Project Implementation (preferred dates)	Fall 2023
Project Completion (preferred date)*	June 2024

Stage – Fall Round (subject to available funding)	Dates
Applications open	September 18, 2023
Applications deadline	December 1, 2023
Funding decisions announced	January 2024
Project Implementation (preferred dates)	January to June 2024
Project Completion (preferred date)*	June 2024

*Priority will be given to projects completed before the last day of the applicable school year; however, we will consider applications for projects that will be completed within one year timeframe.

Key dates are subject to change.

Available Funding

- Up to \$1,000 is available per project
- The total grant funding available to support projects in 2023 is \$50,000.

Eligible Applicants

Student-led groups (two or more students and a project supervisor) can apply. Groups must have a TDSB staff member who will serve as the project supervisor. Student-led groups can include:

- classroom projects
- school clubs and teams
- student councils
- student groups that partner with parent councils
- student-teacher collaborations

Ineligible applicants:

- individual students
- multiple groups from the same classroom (please [contact us](#) to discuss)
- principals and vice-principals
- teachers (without student collaboration)
- TDSB Facility Services, Administration and Trustees
- for-profit businesses
- grant making organizations
- TDSB approved vendors
- community organizations
- registered charitable organizations and/or non-profit environmental organizations
- school groups allied with political parties



Example of a school clothing swap that raised awareness of the environmental impacts of fashion, encouraged reuse of clothing, and helped divert clothing and other textiles from landfill.

Eligible Projects

Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the [TDSB Youth Climate Action Guide](#), which provides important information on how to develop an eligible climate action project.

Proposed projects must:

- be created and delivered by TDSB students;
- satisfy the [objectives of the grant program](#);
- take place only in the city of Toronto;
- satisfy TDSB rules, including working with approved educational programming partners; and
- have all necessary TDSB approvals and permission from the school Principal.

Examples of eligible projects include:

- workshops, demonstrations and group activities
- education campaigns (e.g., [waste reduction](#), energy conservation, active transportation)
- repair events (e.g., bikes, clothing, electronics)
- exchange or swap events (e.g., clothing, books, toys, sports equipment)
- activities that enhance the existing school curriculum
- educational videos
- guest speakers
- environmental education field trips
- virtual learning
- [community climate events](#)
- social media campaigns
- [school ground revitalizations](#)* (e.g., urban farms, food gardens, outdoor classrooms)
- [sustainable transportation events](#) (e.g., bike rodeos, idle-free vehicle blitz)

***School ground revitalization projects must first undergo a [Viability Review](#) by the TDSB. We will not consider any applications for school ground projects or activities that do not have TDSB approval.**

Eligible Costs

Please review the eligible expenses, funding limits and restrictions listed below. Your project budget must only include expenses that are directly related to your project's objectives and time frame.

What we will fund:

- project supplies (e.g., paper, pens, poster boards, markers, paint)
- raw materials (e.g., wood, soil, screws)
- workshop expenses (e.g., speaker fees, training supplies)
- space rental or permit fees for event/activity space
- project communications (e.g., flyers, posters, printing)
- rentals or small equipment purchases

In addition, the following project costs can not exceed 25% of your total grant request:

- skilled labour (e.g., hiring a contractor to build a garden box);
- professional consultant fees (e.g., web design, translation, communications);
- volunteer and participant expenses (e.g., food, transit, personal protective equipment); and
- honouraria for voluntary services (e.g., fees for guest speakers or ceremonial duties).

For example: Your grant request is \$1,000. $\$1,000 \times 25\% = \250 is the maximum budget amount you can request from us for skilled labour.

What we will not fund:

- educational programming (e.g., workshops, seminars, presentations) provided by organizations that have not been approved by the TDSB. Please review the TDSB's list of approved partners.
- paid advertising campaigns in newspapers, etc.
- beautification or landscaping repairs (e.g., ornamental gardens, pathways, etc.)
- costs associated with the regular operation of your group, such as computer equipment, software, phones, internet, accounting services, insurance, etc.
- deliverables that will result in a significant increase in school or TDSB operating or capital costs (e.g., air conditioners, HEPA air filters or HVAC-related items)
- use of City grant funds to provide grants to other parties
- disposable items (e.g., single-use plastics, bottled water)
- fees and expenses for memberships, conferences, travel, personal vehicle use and parking
- alcohol or cannabis

- fundraising drives
- thank you gifts
- activities related to religious and/or political purposes
- playgrounds, furnishings, fencing, armour stone, water-bottle refilling stations
- pollinator gardens (e.g. plants, garden materials and supplies). Please see [PollinateTO Grants](#) for eligibility.
- pre-existing school projects and/or events (e.g., annual fun fairs)
- projects already approved for funding from other City of Toronto grant programs
- promotional items that could contribute to waste (e.g., swag, buttons)
- rental/purchase of combustion engine vehicles or any other gas-powered equipment (e.g., generators), and gasoline or any other fuels
- research or scientific studies
- routine maintenance, emergency repairs or major capital improvements (e.g., cricket pitches, artificial turf, solar installations, playground renovations)
- salaries, hourly wages and income-generating activities for staff/group members
- tree or shrub planting, litter cleanup events and outdoor composting projects

Additional considerations

- **Reduce waste**

If you plan to purchase products as part of your project, consider eco-friendly products that reduce waste and greenhouse gas emissions.

Look for products that:

- are locally produced
- energy or water efficient
- are reusable (e.g., bottles, dishes and cutlery)
- are recyclable - learn more about what goes in the [blue bin](#)
- contain recycled materials (e.g., paper products made from recycled post-consumer fibre)
- are non-hazardous and are not listed as [Household Hazardous Waste \(HHW\)](#)

- **Ask your school administration about the TDSB Purchasing Policy**

All schools must follow TDSB Purchasing Policy and Administrative Procedures. Please talk with your school's administration to determine whether the TDSB approved vendors and/or purchasing policy applies to your project.

- **Are you working with a TDSB approved educational partner?**

The TDSB has a list of approved organizations who can provide programming in-person or online. To search the list, please visit the TDSB web page - [Our Partners](#).

How to apply

- Applications for funding can be completed online or submitted by email. If you don't have adequate access to the internet or technology, we will accept paper application forms. For more information, please [contact us](#).
- Please make sure your application is complete. We will not process incomplete applications.
- Submit only one application per group per grant round. If more than one project is submitted by the same applicant, the City will review the submission that was received first.
- There is no limit to the number of grant applications that can be submitted from a school as long as the applications are from different groups and classrooms, and for different projects.
- You cannot receive more than one City of Toronto grant for the same project.



Example of a school food garden that helped educate the community about locally grown produce.

Completing the application form

The following information is provided to help you complete the requirements and answer the questions in the grant application form.

Part 1: School Information

Provide background information about your school and the contact information for your school principal. All contact information will be used strictly for grant application purposes only.

Part 2: Applicant Information

Provide contact information for the student project lead (main contact person), secondary student contact, an additional student contact (optional), and the TDSB staff member who will serve as the project supervisor. All contact information will be used strictly for grant application purposes only.

Please also provide the following information: name of your group (e.g., club name, student council, classroom project); type of group; and the number of people in your project group (including the student project lead, secondary contact and project supervisor)

Part 3: Project Summary and Need

- A name for your project (e.g., Zero Waste Keele P.S.).
- Estimated timelines of the project. It is our expectation that all grant projects will be completed before the end of the current school year; however, we will accept projects with up to a maximum one year timeframe.

Question a) Tell us about your climate action project (maximum 250 words). To answer this question, please include the following information:

- What is the goal of your project? A project goal is the result you expect to achieve through your project (e.g., become a zero-waste school).
- What do you hope to do? Tell us the specific actions your project will take to achieve your goal (e.g., educate 100 students and staff about zero waste by holding a workshop; or eliminate single-use plastics in the school by

implementing a reusable cup and container program). Each activity should be specific, realistic, measurable and achievable within your project timeframe.

- Where will the project take place? List all the locations where your project activities will take place (e.g., at your school, in the community or at other locations).
- How will your project activities and the end results of your project satisfy the grant program objectives? Proposed projects must satisfy one or both of the following objectives:
 - i. Directly contribute to GHG emissions reduction in Toronto.
 - ii. Educate students, families and/or community members about actions they can take to reduce GHG emissions.

Question b) Why is your project needed (the rationale) and how will it benefit other students, families and the local community? (maximum 150 words)

- Provide a brief explanation of why the City should support your project. Your answer should define the climate action challenge/opportunity you plan to address and why your group and your proposed project will successfully address this challenge/opportunity.
- Please also explain the positive impacts that the project will have on your school and local community.

Part 4: Project Plan

Question a) What steps will you take to complete the project?

Provide a project plan and timeline that lists and describes your key tasks and activities from start to finish and who is responsible for each of the tasks and activities. The timeline can be presented in a weekly or monthly format. For your proposed project, please provide as much detail as you can.

Example: The following is an example of a project plan and timeline for holding a zero waste workshop. This example is intended as a guideline only.

Task/Activity	Activity Description	When (Dates)	Who's Responsible
<i>Project Planning</i>	<i>Hold brainstorming sessions to define objectives</i>	<i>May 2-8</i>	<i>group member name</i>
<i>Project Planning</i>	<i>Define the audience and location for the workshop</i>	<i>May 4-6</i>	<i>group member name</i>
<i>Project Planning</i>	<i>Assign or hire workshop facilitator</i>	<i>May 16-20</i>	<i>group member name</i>
<i>Project Planning</i>	<i>Prepare a schedule and materials for the workshop</i>	<i>May 18-25</i>	<i>group member name</i>
<i>Training</i>	<i>Schedule, develop and train students and staff volunteers</i>	<i>June 6-8</i>	<i>group member name</i>
<i>Hold the workshop</i>	<i>Event date</i>	<i>June 10</i>	<i>group member name</i>
<i>Evaluation</i>	<i>Measure the effectiveness of the workshop</i>	<i>June 13-17</i>	<i>group member name</i>

Part 5: Budget

Tell us how much funding you require and your total project budget. The maximum amount of funding a group can request is \$1,000. Your total budget will include your grant funding request, as well as other funding you plan to use (e.g., Parent Council funds, school budget, other fundraising).

Question a) How will you spend the grant funds?

- Identify and describe the items/services that will be purchased with the grant funding request.
- You can use grant funds to purchase budget items such as material, supplies, equipment and much more.
- Some budget items such as food and honoraria, can not exceed 25% of your total grant request. See important reminder on next page.
- Please research your budget items to accurately estimate costs.

Example: Budget to hold a zero waste workshop. This example is intended as a guideline only.

Budget Item	Description of the Item	Grant Request (\$)
<i>Workshop materials and supplies</i>	<i>Paper, pens, reusable bottles, tape, stickers, work books</i>	<i>400</i>
<i>Event communications</i>	<i>Posters to promote the event.</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Equipment for guest speaker</i>	<i>Rental of special audio equipment</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Professional help for event (see below)</i>	<i>Translation services</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Honoraria (see below)</i>	<i>Guest speaker</i>	<i>150</i>
<i>Volunteer and Participant Expenses (see below)</i>	<i>Food (\$50) and childcare for participants (\$50), name tags and other registration supplies (\$50)</i>	<i>150</i>
Total Grant Request (\$)		1000

Important Reminder: [Funding limits](#)

The following project costs can not exceed 25% of your total grant request:

- skilled labour (e.g., hiring a contractor to build a garden box);
- professional consultant fees (e.g., web design, translation, communications);
- volunteer and participant expenses (e.g., food, transit, personal protective equipment); and
- honouraria for voluntary services (e.g., fees for guest speakers or ceremonial duties).

For example: If your grant request is \$1,000. $\$1,000 \times 25\% = \250 is the maximum budget amount you can request from us for honoraria.

Part 6: Project Impact

Question (a) Who are the groups of people (target audiences) who will benefit from your project? Check all the boxes that apply.

- Students at your school
- Students' parents, other family members and caregivers
- Other youth (outside of school)
- Local businesses
- Community members (not parents/caregivers)
- Other schools
- Community agencies and clubs (e.g. nonprofit organizations)

Question b) How many people (e.g. students, community members, etc.) do you think will take part in and/or be educated by your project?

Please estimate the number of individuals who will directly benefit, learn and be made aware of your project. The numbers can include: participants in project activities, social media followers, family members who receive information, etc.

Question c): How will you measure the success of your project? (maximum 150 words)

Please describe the methods or tools that will be used to evaluate the success of your project. Include both qualitative and quantitative indicators, where applicable.

- Qualitative indicators are typically determined through pre- and post-project surveys and may include: participant feedback, social media interactions, higher awareness, improved knowledge and behaviour changes.
- Quantitative indicators are measurements expressed in numbers, such as the numbers of people you engaged, event attendance, website visits, emails received, social media engagement, waste diverted, etc.

Optional: Supporting Materials

In support of your application, applicants are welcome to submit/upload the following materials:

- letters of support (e.g., school principal, teacher, project partners, etc.)
- permission letters (e.g., property owner giving permission to perform the project)
- photos, drawings or maps of the project location
- any other relevant documentation

How to submit supporting materials:

- Upload the supporting materials using the online application form, or send the materials by email to climateactiongrants@toronto.ca. Please include your *Group Name & Project Name* in the subject line.

Submitting the application form

- Applications for funding can be completed online or submitted by email. If you don't have adequate access to the internet or technology, we will accept paper application forms. For more information, please [contact us](#).
- You will receive an email from City of Toronto staff confirming receipt of your application.
- All submissions for funding will undergo a technical review by City of Toronto staff to determine eligibility.
- Applications that pass the technical review will then be evaluated by a Grant Review Committee.

Grant review process

- Final funding recommendations are the sole responsibility of the Grant Review Committee.
- The Review Committee consists of senior staff from the City's Environment & Energy Division and the TDSB.
- The Review Committee may ask for additional information to assist in the review, assessment and monitoring of your application.
- Successful grant recipients will be notified of the approved grant funding amounts.
- Applicants that accept the funding offer will enter into an agreement with the TDSB. Additional information about the funding award process and the agreement will be provided in detail at that time.

If you get a grant

A. Trustee Agreement

The TDSB will act as a trustee for all grant recipients. In this capacity the TDSB will:

- hold financial authority and a position of trust and responsibility for the grant funds;
- maintain proper fiscal oversight including using their existing financial systems and policies when dispersing the grant funds;
- ensure compliance with accountability and legislative requirements; and
- ensure that projects are implemented according to the program requirements, approved project budget and timelines.

B. Grant payment

- TDSB will disburse funds as per the statement of work and budget for each grant recipient.
- Method of payment to be determined in agreement between TDSB and each successful grant recipient.
- Grant recipients must return any unused portion of the funding award.

C. Reporting Requirements

Grant recipients will be required to submit a brief final report for their project. The report will help the City determine whether the recipient of grant funding has:

- adhered to the project plans submitted during the application phase; and
- met the goals and objectives of the Youth Climate Action Grants.

Grant recipients will be notified of reporting requirements. In addition, grant recipients may be asked to provide photos or video documentation of their project activities.

D. Acknowledgements

Grant recipients must acknowledge the financial assistance provided by the City of Toronto in program materials and signage, including any promotional materials used in project activities. This requirement will be discussed in greater detail after a funding decision is made.

Contact Us

For questions about the grant program or for general guidance about preparing your application, please contact:

City of Toronto, Environment and Climate Division
Metro Hall (c/o Union Station East Wing)
55 John Street
Toronto, Ontario
M5V 3C6

Telephone: 416-392-1135

climateactiongrants@toronto.ca