

Circular Food Innovators Fund Information Session

Questions and Answers

Below are the questions and answers from the January 26, 2026 information session for the City of Toronto's [Circular Food Innovators Fund](#). This document may be updated with any new questions that are received during the February 18, 2026 information session.

1. How mature should a company be to apply? Is a one-founder, pre-seed company eligible?

There are no eligibility requirements around the maturity of a business, but as outlined in the [Application Guidelines](#), applications will be reviewed on the basis of their organizational capacity to plan and deliver the project. Any for-profit business must provide documentation that confirms they are active and their legal status, such as a Corporate Profile for incorporated businesses, registration of Business Name, etc. Other acceptable documentation may include provincial business registration records (for example, after registering with the [province](#) for a sole proprietorship) and Canada Revenue Agency documents.

2. Can we apply for a Green Workforce Project without applying for a Circular Food Innovators Fund (CFIF) Project?

No, you cannot apply for only a Green Workforce Project grant. Although the Green Workforce Project does not need to be tied explicitly to the CFIF Project, funding for a Green Workforce Project is only available to those applicants who are eligible and successful in receiving funding for their CFIF Project.

3. Is there an advisory team member available who can assist with technology questions before submitting the application?

Yes, please email circulareconomy@toronto.ca or call 416-396-4699 if you require technical assistance with the application forms or submission portal.

4. If an organization is seasonal and physically takes place from June to October, what would a site visit in January look like?

City of Toronto staff recognize that project timelines submitted at the application stage are often conceptual, and that some projects may be completed before the January/February site visit window. If an applicant knows or anticipates that January/February will not be conducive for a site visit, they will be expected to flag this during the Fund Agreement signing process. This will allow City staff to plan the site

visit, either during the Project's active period or through an alternative format, that will enable them to see the CFIF Project in operation.

5. Are expenses for a third-party reusable container provider eligible?

Yes, expenses related to a reusable provider are eligible. For example, as per Section 2.3.1 of the [Application Guidelines](#), costs for obtaining reusable dishware would fall under Project Materials, while third-party subscription fees would fall under Subscription Services.

6. We are not in the food service business, but a workspace with an idea for a project to bring fewer single use packages into our workspace and purchase food in a circular system. Would this type of project be eligible?

To be eligible for funding, an applicant must meet the eligibility requirements set out in Section 2.2.1 of the [Application Guidelines](#). Specifically, the applicant must be a business that provides, or most be a Business Improvement Area or academic institution that is working with a business that provides, food and beverage products for takeaway consumption or delivery or reuse system infrastructure for food businesses. If you require further clarification to determine the eligibility of your organization and/or project, please contact circulareconomy@toronto.ca.

7. Are there any benefits to using products made in Canada?

While there are no direct evaluation criteria for using products made in Canada, there are opportunities in the application to highlight other community benefits of your proposed project, such as supporting local economic development. This will be considered when evaluating applications, as well as how each proposed project aligns with and advances the City of Toronto strategic priorities including the City's economic development strategy, [Sidewalks to Skylines: A 10-Year Action Plan for Toronto's Economy \(2025-2035\)](#).

8. My organization is in the beverage alcohol industry. We are in the LCBO and use upcycled fruit and citrus for production. Would our upcycling program be eligible for funding?

No. The current round of funding is limited to reuse systems to replace single-use and takeaway items and does not extend to other components of the broader food system such as food waste and upcycled food products. Learnings from this round of funding will be used to evaluate if and how the City can expand support for business innovation across the food value chain in Toronto as part of future phases of the Circular Food Innovators Fund program.

9. Are you also measuring the weight of compost reduction?

The current round of funding is limited to reuse systems to replace single-use and takeaway items and does not extend to other components of the broader food system such as food waste and compost.

10. Does this program support manufacturing of our own reusable containers?

If you are an applicant that is requesting funding to manufacture reusable containers for retail, this would not be an eligible project. To qualify for funding, the container manufacturing must be directly tied to the eligible services that your business provides, as defined by the CFIF program (eligible businesses are those that provide food and beverage products for takeaway consumption or delivery or provide reuse system infrastructure for food businesses). Thus, the manufacturing of containers would only be eligible if the containers are part of your organization's reuse system whereby your business distributes food in the containers and is then responsible for collecting, washing, and redistributing them.

If you require further clarification to determine the eligibility of your organization and/or project, please contact circulareconomy@toronto.ca.

11. Will the presentation be shared?

Yes, a copy of the presentation is on the [CFIF webpage](#) under 'Information Sessions & Important Dates'. A recording of the presentation as well as a copy of the questions and answers from the session will also be available on the same webpage.