

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Affordable Housing Association of Nova Scotia (AHANS) is the Community Entity contracted by Infrastructure Canada (INFC) to administer the Reaching Home program for Rural and Remote Communities in Nova Scotia, both mainland and Cape Breton Island<sup>1</sup>. The Reaching Home program is a community-based program dedicated to preventing and reducing chronic homelessness across Canada by supporting evidence informed programs and system-level initiatives that meet the needs of local housing and support realities. Reaching Home is part of the [National Housing Strategy in Canada](#).

During 2022-23, AHANS administered approximately \$1.2 Million to support capital projects, system level advancements tied to Coordinated Access and HIFIS improvements as well as enhanced support services to assist people recover from the housing crisis and homelessness throughout rural communities in Nova Scotia. The commitment to prevent and reduce homelessness locally continues for AHANS and its community partners.

## **Invitation to Submit Expressions of Interest for Available Reaching Home Funding for Rural and Remote Nova Scotia**

**Deadline: 11:59pm on September 15, 2023**

Currently, AHANS is inviting organizations and stakeholders to submit Expressions of Interest (EOI) for new **CAPITAL PROJECTS** OR **INNOVATIVE APPROACHES** to enhance existing homelessness response and re-housing systems of care in communities across Nova Scotia (excluding Cape Breton Regional Municipality and Halifax Regional Municipality which are supported through Reaching Home Designated Communities Stream).

## **INVESTMENT PRIORITIES FOR THE AVAILABLE \$750,000:**

Funding Priorities established for the remaining \$750,000 in Reaching Home Investment for the NS Rural and Remote Community Stream include:

- A. **Capital Projects** – Reducing homelessness relies on increasing housing options for households experiencing homelessness. Partners are invited to submit an EOI for 100% Capital for such housing models as **Bridge Housing, Shared Housing or Supportive Housing** (buy, build, convert) for households demonstrating high depth of need and long-term homelessness. See **Schedule A for descriptions of these program models**. All funding for approved Capital Projects must be expensed by March 31, 2024.

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<sup>1</sup> Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM) is excluded from this process since CBRM receives its own Reaching Home investment.

**B. Innovative Homelessness Prevention and Re-Housing Projects** that enhance current responses to housing crises, homelessness and re-housing for households demonstrating high depth of need and long-term homelessness. Such innovations may incorporate any data driven and evidence informed service, project or resource dedicated to resolving homelessness and housing crises for local households. Projects that are selected will demonstrate their ability to reduce the inflow of households into chronic homelessness and/or increase the outflow out of chronic homelessness. EOI submissions for Innovative Projects may include enhancements to existing Reaching Home projects.

### **SUBMISSION OF EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI):**

All interested organizations and partners should submit a **1-2 page EOI** that describes the following (a sample of EOI sections is provided in Appendix 1):

- proposed project: basic details on the proposed activities and target population to be served, service delivery model, expected outcomes and impacts, etc.
- proposed budget required for capital costs, staffing, client-related costs, etc.
- any existing and/or anticipated partnerships and resources (in-kind, other funding sources, etc.) required to ensure successful project completion.

All Expressions of Interest should be submitted to AHANS electronically via [info@ahans.ca](mailto:info@ahans.ca) before **11:59pm (Atlantic Time) on September 15, 2023**. EOI documents received after this time will be returned unopened.

### **REVIEW PROCESS FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (EOI):**

All EOI submissions received before or on September 15, 2023 will be reviewed by AHANS for alignment with the goals of the Community Plan and the Investment Priorities established for this EOI. All eligible submissions will then be reviewed by the Rural and Remote Advisory Board (RRAB) for the identification of successful submissions. **Organizations that submit Expressions of Interest that are supported by AHANS and the RRAB may be invited to submit additional information and documentation required for the submission evaluation process, if required.**

### **QUESTIONS REGARDING EXPRESSION OF INTEREST INVITATION:**

All questions related to this Funding EOI process or if you would like to discuss the suitability of a project for Reaching Home are invited to connect with:

Tracy Flaherty-Willmott  
Director, Programs  
AHANS  
[tracy@ahans.ca](mailto:tracy@ahans.ca)

## APPENDIX A: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### For Additional Information on Reaching Home and Eligible (& Ineligible) Activities:

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Reaching Home has a wide range of eligible activities<sup>2</sup> which it will fund to fulfill the mandated outcome of a reduction in chronic homelessness in rural and remote communities. These activities are described in greater detail the Reaching Home Directives:

[Reaching Home – Eligible & Ineligible Activities](#)

### Financial & Program Considerations

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1. Reaching Home has guaranteed funding to March 31<sup>st</sup> 2024.
2. Under Reaching Home the maximum amount of administrative costs that are eligible toward the project/program is 15% of the project/program's approved budget.
3. Eligible Capital investments under Reaching Home include:
  - The acquisition of housing or facilities through purchase.
  - The acquisition of housing or facilities through construction.
  - Renovations to existing housing or facilities.
4. Operational cost for capital projects (utilities, debt repayment, maintenance and all other operational costs) are ineligible.
5. Innovative Projects such as Interim Housing Project supports or incorporation of harm reduction services within housing support program, etc. must participate in Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) and Coordinated Access, where applicable.

### Description of Capital Housing Projects Described in the EOI Invitation

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**Bridge Housing (a.k.a. Short-term Supportive Housing Option)**<sup>3</sup>: Temporary lodging for people experiencing homelessness that are on a clear pathway to Supportive Housing, Housing with Supports or a high intensity Supportive Housing program. Participants in this form of temporary lodging are in the process of becoming document ready or are already document ready for the housing that follows their Bridge Housing stay. Participants are invited to stay in this housing type if it is determined through local assessment that the household would benefit from intensive supports being available on-site (and ideally 24/7) while working on finalizing the move to the appropriate permanent housing solution. Fixed site housing or motels are the most frequent forms of lodging used for Bridge Housing, and greater privacy is afforded than in most shelter environments. Units in Bridge Housing may be fully self-contained, or offer a private

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<sup>2</sup> Eligible activities incorporate Housing Services, Homelessness Prevention and Shelter Diversion, Client Support Services, Capital Investments and Coordination of Resources and Data Collection.

<sup>3</sup> As defined by OrgCode Consulting, Inc. (2022)

bedroom with shared congregate dining, programming space, kitchens, and restrooms. Exits from Bridge Housing should happen as rapidly as possible - as soon as a spot becomes available in Permanent Supportive Housing, Housing with Supports or intensive Supportive Housing program, and should rarely exceed 12 consecutive months.

**Supportive Housing<sup>4</sup>:** Supportive Housing, also known as Permanent Supportive Housing, is permanent housing. Participants are offered this type of accommodation when they would benefit from on-site support staff, most often available 24/7. Supportive Housing can be provided through self-contained units with private bedroom, restroom, kitchen(ette), and living space; or, it can be provided through private or semi-private bedrooms with shared common areas, programming space, kitchens, and restrooms. The housing most often has expectations or requirements to participate in support services. Program fees and service agreements with residents are common. Supports are available permanently, but the intensity of engagement with services can vary over time.

**Shared Housing<sup>5</sup>:** Shared housing is defined as two or more people who live in one permanent rental housing unit, sharing costs associated with maintaining housing such as rent and utilities. All assisted tenants are listed on the lease and their portion of the rent must be proportional to the amount of private space that tenant has in relation to the other tenants. The overall size of the unit is dictated by the co-housing tenants' preferences, available income, and the cost of rent and utilities. What's important to remember is that shared housing is permanent rental housing, in that the participant is on the lease and has full tenancy rights.

### **Sample Submission for Expression of Interest (EOI)**

Ideally, the following information would be included in the 1-2 page EOI document:

- Name of partner/agency submitted EOI
- Contact Information for EOI
- Proposed Project Description – activities to be delivered/accomplished, staffing requirements, target population to be served, outcomes/impacts of the program/service on clients/participants and community, sustainability of project beyond Reaching Home funding expiration, etc.
- Partnerships – existing and anticipated that will assist in project delivery and completion
- Proposed Project Budget (including confirmed and/or anticipated funding sources, in-kind contributions, etc.)

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<sup>4</sup> As defined by OrgCode Consulting, Inc. (2022)

<sup>5</sup> As defined by Veterans Affairs at [https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/Shared\\_Housing\\_Fact\\_Sheet.pdf](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/Shared_Housing_Fact_Sheet.pdf)