



Developmental
SERVICES

DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES HOUSING TASK FORCE

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST: INNOVATIVE HOUSING SOLUTIONS

Proposal Submission Guidelines
March 2015



Ontario

Letter from the Chair - Developmental Services Housing Task Force

March 13, 2015

The Developmental Services Housing Task Force (HTF) is pleased to announce the release of the Ministry of Community and Social Services' Expression of Interest for Innovative Housing Solutions. The Task Force has been meeting monthly since September 2014 and we see the ministry's announcement as a first major step forward in meeting one of our key objectives. Our "action agenda" prioritizes the recommendation of innovative housing initiatives which respond to the housing crisis confronting Ontario adults with developmental disabilities and their families.

The HTF will work on other key objectives during the months ahead, including:

- A second Expression of Interest announcement (with an application deadline later in 2015), providing another opportunity to submit proposals;
- Continuing to expand the library of online resources for families and organizations about housing initiatives that may be tailored to the needs of their communities;
- Recommendations to the government concerning inter-ministerial cooperation, challenges, and barriers; and
- Investigation of current promising practices in Ontario and beyond that may merit replication or expansion.

The HTF's work is made possible by the government's desire to make real progress on dealing with serious challenges. This is evident by the Ministry of Community and Social Services' (MCSS) commitment of \$3 million in annual funding to explore and test innovative housing solutions.

The "demonstration projects" which are approved may be sustained over time, if they demonstrate their effectiveness towards addressing the housing crisis confronting adults with developmental disabilities.

A few key points relevant to the Expression of Interest announcement:

- There will be a strong preference for proposals that emphasize “innovative partnership” approaches to housing initiatives.
- Although MCSS resources are important to “demonstration projects,” those developing projects should also seek to incorporate energies and resources from other sources including individuals, families, community organizations, agencies, the private sector, multiple levels of government, and multiple provincial ministries.
- There were 14,326 Ontarians with developmental disabilities on residential wait lists as of March 31, 2014 ([Auditor General of Ontario - 2014 Annual Report](#)): we are looking for proposals that demonstrate “outside of the box” thinking in order to speed progress on meeting their needs.
- We are seeking proposals for innovative housing solutions that do not simply duplicate existing approaches such as typical group homes.
- “Replication” will be one focus. Do proposals allow the development of models with the potential for application across the province?
- “Quality” is an important consideration. How does the model enrich the quality of life of those individuals involved – e.g. through social inclusion, community engagement and participation?

This Expression of Interest for Innovative Housing Solutions is one step on the long road to addressing the housing crisis for Ontario adults with developmental disabilities and their families. Although the government’s funding commitment is very welcome, the HTF is aware of the investment’s significant limitations relative to the scale of the housing problem. Growing wait lists, recently highlighted in the Auditor General’s 2014 Annual Report, make it clear that a great deal more will be required if more truly satisfying progress is to be made. The HTF will continue to advocate for expanded investments of government resources in the months and years to come. No one imagines a “one size fits all” housing solution suitable for everyone. The HTF, however, is serious about our mandate and we are committed to expanding resources and developing a range of tools and options. We strongly believe that the Ministry’s Expression of Interest for Innovative Housing Solutions announcement will see the emergence of innovative and creative demonstration projects which will be a valuable step forward.

Yours truly,



Ron Pruessen, Chair

on behalf of the Ontario Developmental Services Housing Task Force

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Overview and Background

The Housing Study Group, a committee of the Joint Ministry/Developmental Services Sector Partnership Table (the “Partnership Table”), released a report in September 2013 entitled “Ending the Wait – an Action Agenda to Address the Housing Crisis Confronting Ontario Adults with Developmental Disabilities.”

The report made several recommendations, including the creation of a Capacity-Building Task Force to look at innovative housing options and develop demonstration projects for the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) to fund and evaluate.

In April 2014, MCSS announced the creation of the Developmental Services Housing Task Force (the “Housing Task Force”) – the first ever cross-sector task force to tackle housing issues specifically for adults with developmental disabilities. The work of the Housing Task Force is one component of the Ontario government’s \$810 million investment strategy for community and developmental services, announced in the 2014 Ontario budget. This investment includes annual funding of \$3 million province-wide to fund innovative and promising housing practices.

Over two years, the Task Force will:

- Develop a framework for capacity-building projects, and identify and recommend demonstration projects for government investment and evaluation beginning in 2015;
- Identify performance indicators for demonstration projects; and
- Develop online resources to help individuals and families get information, network, collaborate and support each other in exploring and creating successful housing solutions.

The Task Force plans to offer at least two opportunities for submission of housing proposals: the first, with details provided in this document, has a submission deadline of April 24, 2015; the details of a second opportunity will be announced later in 2015.

The Housing Task Force will review proposals and make recommendations to MCSS.

Recommended proposals will support the ongoing transformation of the developmental services system into one that: delivers person-centred/directed supports; promotes greater inclusion and independence for individuals; and engages relevant sectors, governments and provincial ministries.

When recommending projects for funding, the Housing Task Force will consider the benefit of the project in contributing to the goals of transformation and achieving the specific housing objectives. The Task Force will assess and evaluate projects based on whether they are cost-effective, inclusive solutions that have potential for operating in other areas of the province. MCSS will review the Housing Task Force's recommendations and approve a number of projects for funding. During and/or following the project implementation period, MCSS may consider successful and potentially sustainable projects for continued funding or expansion beyond the initial two-year demonstration project period.

Objectives

The proposals recommended for funding by the Housing Task Force should:

1. Expand overall capacity for housing and residential supports by developing partnerships among individuals, families, agencies, multiple levels of government, community organizations and the private sector.
2. Expand the range of options and choices available to adults with developmental disabilities, emphasizing creative demonstration projects that offer alternatives to the currently offered MCSS-funded residential services and supports.
3. Build community capacity (i.e., providing additional housing spaces) that promotes inclusion and enhances the quality of life for individuals receiving housing and residential supports so that more people can more fully participate in their communities.
4. Demonstrate ways to improve the existing developmental services system, and significantly reduce in a timely manner wait lists for housing and residential supports for adults with developmental disabilities. This includes submissions that propose development and analysis of new housing models.
5. Promote person-centred/person-directed approaches through individualized supports that are provided in inclusive, community-based settings.

Eligibility

Mandatory criteria: Proposals for this funding can only be submitted by those who are or who have partnered with a legal entity, which include but are not limited to transfer payment agencies. All proposed projects must be related to housing for eligible adults with a developmental disability. If individuals will be provided with housing within the scope of the project, individuals must be confirmed eligible for developmental services through Developmental Services Ontario.

It is not required that the legal entity currently be in receipt of MCSS funding (i.e., be an existing MCSS-funded transfer payment agency). While MCSS strongly encourages partnerships within and across sectors, each project must identify a lead applicant. The lead applicant is the single point of contact for MCSS and will sign the contract. The legal entity accepts responsibility for meeting the terms and conditions of the funding, should the proposal be selected.

As Housing Task Force members may be part of groups submitting projects for funding, members have signed conflict of interest declarations at the beginning of their membership. This declaration articulates that they must ensure that any potential conflict of interest arising in regard to any matter under discussion by the Task Force is drawn to the attention of the Chair.

The Chair will determine what, if any, action is appropriate to address the conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest, including requiring members to recuse themselves from some discussions or decisions. More specifically, this means that Housing Task Force members who belong to an organization that submits a proposal cannot provide supplementary information or discuss, review, score or recommend those proposals.

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

A review team will evaluate project proposals using the criteria listed below. Each proposal will receive a score out of a maximum of 100 points. The following scoring criteria apply:

- **Alignment:** The proposed approach aligns with the principles of developmental services transformation (e.g., citizenship, person-centred, fairness and equity, accessibility, portability, accountability, safety and security, sustainability) as outlined in “[Opportunities and Action](#)”. (20 points)
- **Innovation:** Innovative approaches that demonstrate how they differ from traditional housing models, including those that are funded primarily by MCSS. (20 points)
- **Partnering:** Building creative partnerships that tap the expertise and resources of those not previously or substantially involved in housing/residential programs for adults with a developmental disability. This entails moving beyond MCSS-funded agencies to engage (or more fully involve) families, community organizations, the private sector, municipal and federal governments and other ministries within the provincial government. The proposed projects should leverage or complement existing services, resources and infrastructure in communities. The projects should propose to improve collaboration within the sector or build partnerships with other sectors. (15 points)
- **Sustainability:** (1) *Contribution to system sustainability:* Demonstrate potential for long-term impact on provincial capacity for reducing wait lists for housing and residential supports for adults with a developmental disability: for example, could the proposed projects be scalable (i.e., expanded) or replicable (i.e., adopted by others) in order to contribute to wait list reduction? (2) *Project sustainability:* Does the proposal include any other plans for its sustainability over time? (15 points)
- **Impact:** Potential for long-term impact on quality of life and opportunities for community inclusion: for example, will growth in community capacities enrich the employment, educational, and social experiences of adults with developmental disabilities? (10 points)
- **Feasibility:** Is the proposal possible within the proposed timelines and budget? Have relevant milestones, indicators, and outcomes been identified with a view to measuring progress and overall project success? (10 points)
- **Value for money:** The proposed budget represents good value for money, and expenditures identified are directly related to the project. The budget provides sufficient details and breakdown of expenditures. (10 points)

Ineligible Projects and Expenses

The following types of projects, expenditures and activities are not eligible for funding under this initiative:

- Approaches that do not demonstrate how they differ from traditional housing models, including those that are funded primarily by MCSS.
- Projects that are inconsistent with principles of developmental services transformation
- Operational funding to enhance existing MCSS-funded programs or provide bridge funding
- Most equipment purchases*
- Major capital for the construction of new buildings or additions to existing structures **

*Certain equipment purchases may be considered an eligible expense as part of proposals where the project meets the overall objectives and evaluation criteria of the fund, and a clear rationale is identified and explained in the proposal.

**Some one-time funding may be available from government, but not specifically under the Housing Task Force.

Review and Selection Process

Where the reviewers identify similar proposals or opportunities for collaboration, the Housing Task Force may ask applicants to work together to encourage partnerships.

Project proposals will undergo a two-step review process. The Housing Task Force will review and evaluate submissions using the established criteria. MCSS will review and approve a number of projects recommended by the Housing Task Force.

Due to funding limitations, not all proposals recommended to MCSS will be approved for funding. MCSS will make the final decisions on which projects are funded. Unsuccessful applicants may request feedback on their proposal from MCSS and/or the Housing Task Force.

Proposal submission instructions

Applicants must submit proposals using the submission form provided and ensure mandatory criteria are met. If a project involves multiple communities or locations, it should be submitted as a single integrated proposal.

Letters of reference or recommendation are not required, although applicants may submit partnership letters or memoranda of understanding to indicate formal collaboration on a project.

If two or more applicants collaborate on the development of a proposal, it is highly recommended that they submit one joint proposal instead of submitting separate proposals. Promoting collaboration and partnerships is a key objective, and the review panel will take this into consideration when reviewing and scoring proposals.

Applicants should submit their completed proposal submission form to dstransformation.css@ontario.ca no later than **5:00 p.m. on April 24, 2015**.

Alternatively, paper copies can be submitted to:

Developmental Services Housing Task Force - Expression of Interest

c/o Allan Devlin, Senior Policy Advisor
Community Supports Policy Branch
Ministry of Community and Social Services
80 Grosvenor Street
4th Floor, Hepburn Block
Toronto, ON M7A 1E9

Submissions received after this date/time will not be reviewed as part of the current expression of interest process. Applicants will receive an acknowledgement of receipt of their electronic and/or hard copy proposal. Key contact information must be provided in the event the applicant needs to be contacted.

Proposal content

All proposals must demonstrate how the proposed projects are directly related to the objectives and intent of the expression of interest. The potential impact or outcomes of the project must be clearly stated. Similarly, proposals should focus on specific, relevant and measurable details about the project, including planned activities, milestones and expected outcomes, rather than broad statements about values or theoretical concepts.

Performance accountability and financial reporting

All projects selected for funding will be required to report on performance indicators. MCSS will identify all reporting requirements for successful submissions and include them in the funding agreement with the legal entity.

As noted in the proposal submission form, each proposal must also include measurable outcomes and the indicators to be used. Where proposed projects operate longer than one fiscal year and have requested funding for two years, continued funding from MCSS for the second year will be contingent on a satisfactory report-back on project milestones, performance indicators and financial accountability. As these are demonstration projects, MCSS may ask project leads to be involved in an evaluation, and agree to share information about the project more publicly.

Additional information

Please note that key terms used in this document are defined in the attached Glossary (Appendix).

Some questions and answers related to the Expression of Interest are also provided on the ministry's website.

If you have additional questions, please contact Allan Devlin by email at allan.devlin@ontario.ca or by phone at 416-325-1950.

Disponible en français.

Appendix: Glossary

Bridge funding: When you expect funding later and you need short-term funding, for example between two projects, to carry through.

Capital expenses (minor/major): Capital refers to funding used to create new buildings, additions, renovations or to change the use of the structure, as opposed to operational funding to deliver services and supports for the people on an ongoing basis. Major capital refers to large projects such as a new building or significant renovation. Minor capital refers to smaller-scale renovations or updates to a building (e.g. replacing roof, windows).

Demonstration project: A project that aims to show how a specific idea (e.g., housing model) will operate successfully. Another term often used is “pilot project”.

Developmental Services Ontario (DSO): DSOs are the nine primary contact points for people who request information about services and supports for persons with developmental disabilities in their communities. It is a single access point to apply for MCSS-funded adult developmental services and supports.

Eligible for Developmental Services: When a person is confirmed as a resident of Ontario, 18 years or older, and having a developmental disability as defined in the *Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons With*

Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008 and is thus eligible to apply for MCSS-funded adult developmental services and supports. They may be confirmed as eligible but may or may not currently be receiving any MCSS-funded developmental services and supports.

Innovative housing: Housing ideas or examples different than the range of existing MCSS-funded residential services and supports.

Legal entity: A lawful or legally standing association, corporation, partnership, proprietorship, trust, or individual. It has legal capacity to (1) enter into agreements or contracts, (2) assume obligations, (3) incur and pay debts, (4) sue and be sued in its own right, and (5) be accountable for illegal activities.

Performance measures / indicators: Key areas to study during the operation of a project. Specific indicators must be explained and can be counted. The process includes assessing the results (outcomes) and activities of a project to determine what worked well and needs to be improved or changed.

Replicate: To do something in the same way elsewhere (“The project was very successful in London so we want to replicate it in Kingston.”)