

**ACT
TOGETHER
FOR
INCLUSION
FUND (ACTIF)**



**CALL FOR PROPOSALS
GUIDELINES**

***Build Solidarity
February 2022***

educate. empower. change.

Act Together for Inclusion Fund (ACTIF)

Around the world, people face human rights violations due to their sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC). Activists have made significant advancements to protect and fulfill the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, two-spirit and intersex (LGBTQ2I)* persons. But while important gains have been made on some fronts, the recognition and protection of rights remain uneven, particularly for two-spirit, trans, and intersex persons, as well as for bisexual, queer, and lesbian women. Human rights violations persist – including violence, stigmatization, restrictions on freedom of expression and association, and discrimination in access to health services, education, and decent work.

ACTIF is an outcome of significant efforts made by Canadian civil society, coordinated by Dignity Network Canada (DNC), to advocate for greater Canadian support for advancing the human rights of LGBTQ2I people internationally. The launch of the **Act Together for Inclusion Fund (ACTIF)** therefore marks a highly anticipated and historic moment for Canadian funding for international LGBTQ2I initiatives. Funded by **Global Affairs Canada** and managed by Equitas in partnership with DNC, **ACTIF aims to enhance the respect, protection and fulfillment of the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, two-spirit and intersex (LGBTQ2I) persons in countries in the Global South, and specifically those eligible for Official Development Assistance.** ACTIF will strengthen a network of Canadian LGBTQ2I organizations and build solidarity with local LGBTQ2I civil society organizations by providing additional, or previously inaccessible, opportunities to implement programming in the Global South.

*Limitations exist in using the terms lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, two-spirit and intersex. There is a spectrum of gender identity and sexual diversity both in Canada and around the world and there are many other words in various languages to describe this diversity, reflecting the culturally and historically-specific ways in which sexual and gender identities are recognized and expressed. For example, in Canada, the term “two-spirit” is used by and within Indigenous communities, reflecting the history among some peoples of describing those who differed from gender norms and crossed gender boundaries as carrying both male and female spirits.



Equitas and Dignity Network Canada

Equitas advances equality, social justice and respect for human dignity through transformative human rights education programs in Canada and around the world. To deliver on its mission, Equitas' programming contributes to the empowerment of individuals and groups that face discrimination, exclusion and other forms of human rights violations to challenge inequality and discrimination and take action to respect, protect and defend human rights. Equitas has a significant track record implementing programming on LGBTQI rights, including in Haiti with Kouraj, and in East Africa with the East African Sexual Health and Rights Initiative. Equitas supports a network of 4000+ human rights defenders, including many LGBTQ2I human rights defenders.

Dignity Network Canada (DNC) is a network of civil society organizations across Canada involved in supporting the human rights of people regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) globally. DNC believes that Canada and Canadians play a role in the world in supporting movements involved in advancing the human rights of LGBTQ2I people. Our vision is a world where LGBTQ2I people everywhere enjoy full human rights and socio-economic well-being.

Participatory and Feminist Approach

Equitas and Dignity Network Canada recognize how power and privilege are inherent to global grant-making and the importance of destabilizing colonial funding dynamics. This is why we are strong proponents of feminist and participatory approaches that shift the power of decision-making to communities themselves. In line with the principles of “nothing about us without us” and “the process is as important as a result”, ACTIF believes that local LGBTQ2I human rights defenders and organizations are experts of their own realities and should be at the heart of decision making.



Engaging a diversity of Southern LGBTQ2I communities in funding decisions is critical to more robust LGBTQ2I networks, trust, and solidarity — the building blocks for powerful collective action and vibrant movements. The leadership of LGBTQ2I activists and grantmakers in the Fund’s governance also allows for more informed, equitable, and effective investments and outcomes under ACTIF.

With this in mind, Equitas and DNC established the **ACTIF Advisory Committee** and ACTIF Project Selection Committee. The ACTIF Advisory Committee is made up of 10 individuals with lived experience, skills, and expertise in LGBTQ2I-related activism and international grantmaking. This Committee advises on and validates the strategic direction of the Fund, monitors its implementation, and advises on adaptations in response to dynamic contexts and needs.

The **ACTIF Project Selection Committee** is a separate and autonomous committee that is responsible for making decisions on applications submitted for funding. The Project Selection Committee includes individuals with deep experience in LGBTQ2I human rights work globally. Equitas and DNC sit on this Committee as non-voting members. The Project Selection Committee is tasked with reviewing proposals and selecting projects. Equitas and DNC have a right of refusal should a project not meet the requirements of Global Affairs Canada. This Committee also reports on the outcomes of its deliberations, processes, and lessons learned to the Advisory Committee, DNC, and Equitas.



Guiding Principles

Intersectionality

ACTIF recognizes that it is not only transphobia, biphobia, and homophobia that impact LGBTQ2I people. Rather, these systems of power intersect and compound with colonialism, racism, classism, patriarchy, ableism, and ageism, among others. These power systems exist both within and between LGBTQ2I communities, partners, and funders, as well as within society in general. The Fund and its projects aim to integrate an intersectional analysis and approach to addressing the human rights of LGBTQ2I persons.



Inclusion

Historical and current power dynamics and inequalities within LGBTQ2I communities require intentional measures to ensure marginalized groups inform, access, and benefit from the Fund. ACTIF maintains a commitment to deliberate practices of inclusion and power redistribution through its operations and in its portfolio. In particular, ACTIF prioritizes the leadership of two-spirit, trans, and intersex people, as well as bisexual, queer, and lesbian women from around the world in its governance and programming.

Indivisibility of Human Rights

ACTIF affirms the indivisibility of human rights. Civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights are all human rights inherent to every person's dignity, regardless of SOGIESC. These rights are equal in status, and one cannot be prioritized over another. Work to advance specific rights under ACTIF must not undermine other rights.

'Do No Harm'

The Fund is guided by the principle of 'do no harm' in both partnerships and programming. ACTIF aims to challenge colonial funding dynamics and work in solidarity with marginalized LGBTQ2I groups in both Canada and the Global South to minimize harm. ACTIF will also pay particular attention to the security and well-being of Canadian partners, Southern partners, and local communities to ensure that activities do not exacerbate risks of discrimination or violence. Information about project partners and individual activists will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.



Call for Proposals

Delivered over seven years, the Fund will support multi-year projects designed and implemented by Canadian CSOs and Southern partners. **Four** calls for proposals will be launched throughout the life of the Fund:

Schedule of Call for Proposals

- 1st Call: 2021
- 2nd Call: 2022
- 3rd Call: 2023
- 4th Call: 2024

Equitas and DNC are pleased to launch ACTIF's 2nd Call for Proposals – Build Solidarity

ACTIF will accept applications for projects to advance the human rights of LGBTQ2I people. The duration of projects can be between 24 and 36 months. Organizations may apply for funding between \$100,000 CAD and \$500,000 CAD.

ACTIF aims to finance projects that integrate an intersectional and human rights-based approach (HRBA), as well as projects presented by two-spirit, trans, and intersex organizations, as well as by bisexual, queer, and lesbian women, to ensure the participation and leadership of marginalized groups within LGBTQ2I communities.

While the first call for proposals was designed for organizations with a track-record of working internationally, the “Build Solidarity” call for proposals aims to increase solidarity and linkages between LGBTQ2I organization in the Global South and in Canada and to support Canadian organizations new to working internationally. This is why capacity strengthening activities are offered for this round of applications to accompany organizations new to Global Affairs Canada funding modalities in developing proposals.

Mechanisms are also integrated to evaluate the applicant's experience for each call for proposals so that each process is adapted and improved to better meet the needs and realities of LGBTQ2I organizations. This iterative structure will support learning and the evolution of ACTIF grant-making and implementation over the life of the Fund.



Funding Priorities

ACTIF's ultimate objective is to advance the human rights and socio-economic outcomes for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, two-spirit and intersex (LGBTQ2I) persons in the Global South.

ACTIF funds projects presented in partnership by Canadian and Southern organizations (based in ODA-eligible countries). It also aims to contribute to growing solidarity between Canadian and Southern LGBTQ2I movements, while strengthening the capacity of Canadian LGBTQ2I-led organization to engage in international LGBTQ2I human rights programming and access Global Affairs Canada funding.

To contribute to advancing the human rights of LGBTQ2I people, ACTIF will fund projects that respond to one or more (maximum three) of the following intermediate outcomes. Projects do not need to contribute to all intermediate objectives. Rather, the list is meant to be representative and inclusive of various LGBTQ2I organizations in Canada and in the Global South, as well as the diversity of strategies employed to advance the human rights of LGBTQ2I people. Organizations can adapt these outcomes to better respond to the priorities identified with their partners.

- **Stronger and more resilient Southern LGBTQ2I organizations** - Improved sustainability of local LGBTQ2I rights organizations in the Global South, particularly those representing two-spirit, trans, intersex communities and lesbian, bisexual, and queer women.
 - **Stronger and greater reach of LGBTQ2I movements in the Global South.**
 - **Increased collective and self-care for LGBTQ2I activists and organizations**, which in turn will strengthen movements.
 - **Increased participation and leadership of trans, two-spirit, and/or intersex people, and/or lesbian, bisexual and queer women** or targeted approaches addressing their needs.
 - **Changing social norms or community acceptance on LGBTQ2I issues.** This could include a wide range of tools and strategies including human rights education, media, journalism, arts and culture.
 - **Increased advocacy, influence and allyship** with government and other sectors leading to change in policy or practice.
 - **Reduced discrimination and violence** or increased mechanisms of prevention, protection and response to SOGIESC discrimination and violence.
 - **Increased economic opportunities and resilience**, and access to decent work for LGBTQ2I persons.
 - **Increased access to a full range of sexual and reproductive health services.**
-

Organizations will not be asked to specify these outcomes in Step 1 of the application process, which is focused on organizational profiles. These intermediate outcomes are included here to help you understand the focus of ACTIF and guide you in evaluating whether your project fits with ACTIF's objectives.



Eligibility Criteria

Projects are required to meet the following four criteria in order to be eligible for funding from ACTIF:

1. Solidarity-based partnerships between Canadian and Southern organizations

- ACTIF will only fund projects presented in partnership with Canadian and Southern organizations. The Fund aims to contribute to solidarity between LGBTQ2I movements in Canada and overseas.
- Organizations will be asked to demonstrate how their partnership approach will be equitable and solidarity based.
- In Step 2, for the project proposals, organizations will also be asked about their partnership and project governance approach.
- When reviewing the project proposals, the Project Selection Committee will consider equitable sharing of resources, information and decision making.
- Organizations will also be asked to demonstrate how LGBTQ2I persons from the targeted communities and Southern partner organizations engaged in or led project design and decision making and how the project is responding to Southern LGBTQ2I community priorities. Southern LGBTQ2I organizations and communities should identify needs and strategies to respond to these needs.

What does a solidarity-based approach mean?

Equitas and DNC would like to collaborate with DNC's Community of Practice, the ACTIF Advisory Committee and project partners to explore and deepen our understanding of solidarity-based approaches to international human rights work. Power and privilege are inherent to funding, the international cooperation sector, and relations between organizations based in the North and those in the South. While it is a complex and long process to address systemic inequalities, ACTIF encourages partnerships and projects that build relationships based on trust, mutual respect and accountability. Transparency and sharing of information are key to achieving this. Canadian organizations should recognize the deep knowledge and expertise of local actors and partners, who should be at the heart of decision making on priorities, project design, governance and resource allocation.

2. Legal status, legitimacy and governance of Canadian applicants

- The applicant is a registered non-profit organization or charity in Canada.
- The organization has been in operation for at least one year.
- The organization has a mandate or board authorization to work internationally.
- A track record of working on LGBTQ2I rights is required, whether in Canada or internationally.
- The organization has been involved in LGBTQ2I human rights movements, coalitions, networks, whether in Canada or internationally.

3. Legitimacy, ODA eligibility and governance of Southern applicants

- The Southern organization is established in a country eligible to receive **Overseas Development Assistance**.
- The organization has been in operation for at least one year.
- The organization is LGBTQI-led.
- The organization has a track record of working on LGBTQ2I rights.

Non registered organizations: ACTIF will accept proposals with Southern non-registered organizations. However, the Canadian organization will need to demonstrate a track-record of working with international partners on international projects. As per the **ACTIF Procedure on Non-Registered Organization**, more extensive due diligence steps will be required for partnerships including non-registered organizations. If organizations are new to working internationally, they will be required to have a registered Southern organization as a partner.

4. Capacity of Canadian and Southern organizations

- Organizations must have the capacity to manage the size of the requested budget. The Selection Committee will consider the overall size of the organization's operating budget in relation to the requested budget.
- The Selection Committee will assess any capacity building needs and support required from ACTIF for organizations with modest experience.

Additionally:

- Audited financial statements must be provided. If these are not available, non-audited financial statements along with an attestation by the Board Treasurer will be required.
- All organizations receiving funding from GAC must have a policy on preventing sexual exploitation and abuse. Please provide a copy of this policy if you have one. If you do not, you may sign on to [Equitas' policy](#).

PRIORITY CRITERIA

5. Canadian LGBTQ2I-led

- ACTIF will give priority consideration to projects submitted by Canadian LGBTQ2I organizations. This will be determined by considering the organization's mission, track-record of working on LGBTQ2I human rights and whether there is significant representation (51%+) of LGBTQ2I people on staff, in senior management and on the Board.

6. Inclusion

- Inclusiveness of Two Spirit, lesbian and bisexual and queer women, trans or intersex (2SLBQTI) people, organizations and communities, particularly those that are typically excluded from funding opportunities.

This tool allows organizations to self-orient their eligibility to ACTIF. In the table below, organizations may be considered for funding if they score high (best or good) in at least one of the two columns.

	Credibility and Inclusion	Southern Capacity and Voices
<u>Best</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization has significant representation (51%+) of LGBTQ2I staff in senior management and on the Board. Primary focus of organization's work is with LGBTQ2I communities. Organization is involved and active in LGBTQ2I movements, coalitions and networks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southern organization with significant representation (51%+) of LGBTQ2I staff in senior management and on the Board. A significant portion of the budget is managed by Southern LGBTQ2I organizations. Southern LGBTQ2I communities and organization co-led project planning & design.
<u>Good</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization with significant programming on LGBTQ2I rights, such as sexual health and HIV programming. Initiatives are led from within the LGBTQ2I community, in open consultation and with accountability to LGBTQ2I communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southern LGBTQ2I communities or organizations were involved in project planning and design. The budget is equitably shared with Southern LGBTQ2I organizations.
<u>Fair</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization with prior experience partnering with LGBTQ2I organizations for rights-based programming. Mission demonstrates strong feminist and inclusive values and approaches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southern LGBTQ2I partners were consulted in project planning and design. A modest percentage of the budget is for activities in ODA countries.
<u>Does not meet criteria</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizations with no track record working on LGBTQ2I issues or experience partnering with LGBTQ2I communities in Canada or overseas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Southern partners have been identified. Budget is largely or exclusively for Canadian organization and their staff.

Who is not eligible for funding?

- Canadian organizations applying to the Fund without a Southern partner
- Southern organizations applying directly to the Fund without a Canadian partner
- University, college, or other academic institutions
- Private sector institutions
- Individuals

What is not eligible for funding?

- Projects in non-ODA eligible countries
- Private business or profit-making efforts (including business development)
- Individual projects (including graduate research and fellowships)
- Efforts that endorse candidates for public office (including political parties and election campaigns)
- Capital campaigns, endowments, or deficit financing
- Research projects or one-time events as the core purpose of the project
- Projects taking place entirely in Canada



While some costs can be incurred in Canada, such as admissible program management costs, the majority of funding should be directed to Southern organizations and their work. Some activities taking place in Canada are eligible as long as they are complementary, and not the main objective of the project. Some examples include travel costs for LGBTQ2I human rights defenders who come to Canada to participate in public engagement activities, educational tours, or solidarity building with Canadian LGBTQ2I organizations and movements. However, this cannot be the main objective of a project proposal. Canadian CSOs will have to coordinate these trips to Canada with ACTIF and DNC to coincide with, or be complementary to ACTIF roundtable events.

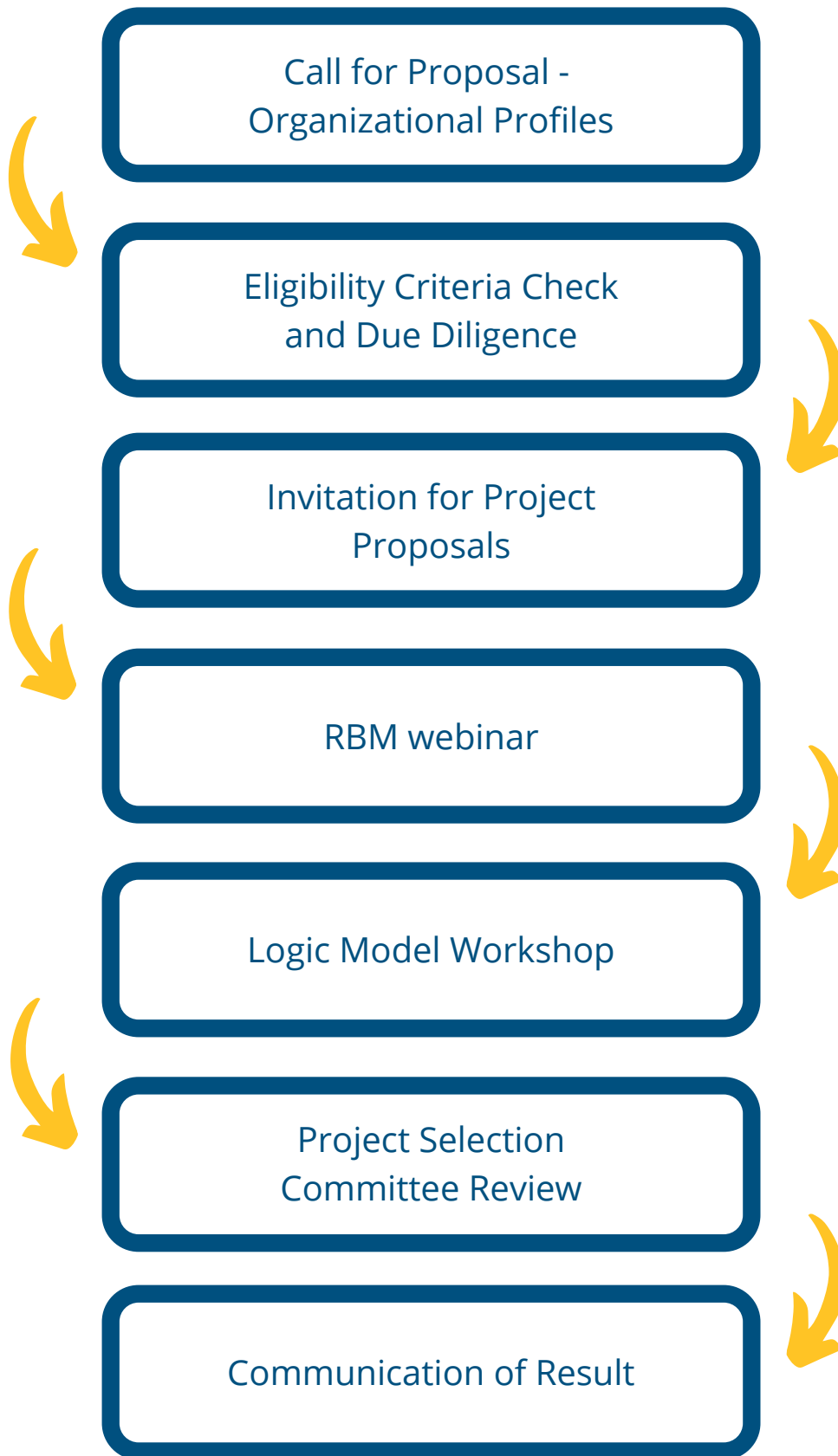
Funding modalities of Global Affairs Canada

ACTIF is funded by Global Affairs Canada, and as such, all projects funded by ACTIF are subject to GAC terms and conditions. Like most donor agencies, these requirements regarding financial and risk management or monitoring and evaluation can be onerous and burdensome. While ACTIF is working with GAC to better adapt funding modalities to the realities of LGBTQ2I human rights organizations, this is a long-term process. ACTIF is also committed to supporting applicants and partners in navigating these requirements. However, all partner organizations should consider the efforts required in meeting these obligations prior to applying.

Calendar

- ✓ **Launch of the call for proposals (Step 1):** February 28, 2022
- ✓ **Eligibility Quiz: *******
- ✓ **Orientation webinars:** week of March 7, 2022 (English/French) and Q&A during the week of March 14, 2022 (Bilingual)
- ✓ **Organizational Profile deadline (Step 1):** April 8, 2022 (6pm EST)
- ✓ **Review of Profiles and Initial Due Diligence:** 5 weeks
- ✓ **Invitations to submit Proposal (Step 2):** week of May 16, 2022
- ✓ **Proposal Webinar (EN/FR):** week of May 16, 2022
- ✓ **RBM Training (EN/FR):** week of May 23, 2022
- ✓ **Logic Model/TOC workshop:** week of May 30, 2022
- ✓ **Proposal Q&A Webinar (EN/FR):** week of June 13, 2022
- ✓ **Proposal submission deadline:** July 29, 2022 (6pm EST)
- ✓ **Project Selection Committee deadline:** September 30, 2022
- ✓ **Communications to applicants:** October 2022
- ✓ **Funding and partnership agreements:** October 2022
- ✓ **First Disbursements:** January 2023
- ✓ **Evaluation of application process:** February 2023

Funding Process



How to Apply

The application process will take place in two phases: Step 1 is an Organizational Profile, and Step 2 is a Project Proposal.

Equitas and DNC understand that organizations invest time and energy in preparing applications for funding and so have designed a two-step process to reduce the burden of resource mobilization. The Organizational Profile is meant to be a first step to assess eligibility and priority criteria, prior to an invitation for the development of a full proposal.

Step 1: Organizational Profile

Please submit your Organizational Profile **online**. The application form and this call for proposal document are available in English, French and Spanish in Word version as well.

Multiple Canadian and Southern organizations may apply together. For example, a traditional Canadian organization may partner with an LGBTQ2I Canadian organization and a Southern Organization.

Please keep in mind that ACTIF is designed to provide longer term funding (up to three years) and more sizeable grants. Applications with a smaller number of Southern partners over a longer period of time will be favourably regarded. There is also a maximum of four Southern partners per project. Only projects of two years or more will be considered for budgets between \$400,000 and \$500,000.

Instructions for Online Application Form

After you create a login for the online application form*, you will be asked to complete four steps:

1) Contact information

2) Project details: You will be asked for anticipated budget and length of project for planning purposes, though this may be modified when you submit your Project Proposal.

3) Organizational Profile:

- Canadian organizational profile(s)
- Southern organizational profile(s)
- Documents of Support
 - Audited Financial Statements or non-audited Financial Statements accompanied by an Attestation letter from Canadian partner
 - Letter of support speaking to the nature of the partnership, signed by all lead organizations
 - Registration Certificate of Southern organization(s)
 - Link to prevention of sexual violence policy (harassment, exploitation and abuse), if available.
 - Declaration of incidents of sexual violence, fraud and corruption.

4) References: You will be asked to provide two references for each Southern organization.

We recommend submitting your Organizational Profile a few days before the deadline: **April 8, 2022, 6:00 PM EST.** This way, you may avoid the possibility of a technical issue. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.

*Please take note that the French and Spanish versions of the application platform is powered by Google translate and so the translation is not perfect.

Information Sessions

Canadian and Southern organizations considering applying are encouraged to participate in the orientation webinars offered by Equitas. See the calendar on page 16 for dates for English and French sessions. These sessions will allow organizations to better prepare their funding applications. The ACTIF team will provide an orientation to the application form and answer questions from participants. Webinars will be recorded if all attendees consent. The recording will also be posted on the Equitas website.

We will also provide a Results-Based Management training and workshop to help you develop your theory of change, logic model, results and indicators.

Information to register will be posted on Equitas' website.

Support

The Equitas ACTIF team is available to respond to questions and clarifications. Please email vcottureau@equitas.org.

Assessment of Applications

ACTIF staff will review organizational profiles according to the eligibility and priority criteria and will perform basic due diligence on all organizations applying to the Fund. Equitas' due diligence process includes an internet and news key word search, a check against terrorist organizations' lists and the verification of at least two references.

Please note that it is the responsibility of Canadian and Southern partners to have undertaken their own due diligence process prior to deciding to partner with the other organizations.

Declaration of incidents of sexual violence or fraud

In the application form, all partners will be asked to sign a declaration regarding incidents of sexual violence, fraud, or corruption. It is also their responsibility to declare incidents of sexual violence to ACTIF. Failure to declare incidents will result in immediate disqualification.

Equitas recognizes that all organizations are at risk of incidents of sexual violence or fraud. Neither an organization, nor the populations it serves should be automatically penalized because of an incident. As such, ACTIF will give applicants the opportunity to provide evidence of appropriate preventative and corrective measures. Please consult our procedures [on Fraud](#) and [Sexual violence](#) for more information.

Step 2: Project Proposal Submission

Invited organizations will be provided with access to the full proposal form. Project proposals must be submitted through the [web portal](#) and consist of:

- Application Form with sections on context, theory of change, risks and indicators
- Project Budget
- Logic Model and Work Plan

For more information on Step 2 application form and guidelines, please visit the [Equitas website here](#). Support will be provided in the development of the project proposals through training on results-based managed (RBM), workshops and guidance on the theory of change, and the formulation of results, indicators and risks.

The Project Selection Committee will refer to both the Organizational Profiles and the Project Proposals in their assessment of applications for funding. They will refer to the main eligibility and priority criteria when evaluating full applications. Additional criteria will be applied for the evaluation of the project, which will be outlined in the Step 2 - project proposal application guidelines.

As per its feminist approach, ACTIF will communicate with all project partners, Canadian and Southern, throughout the application process. ACTIF will ensure transparency and access to information for all partners involved in an application for funding, whether to confirm reception, provide support, request more information or to communicate the results of the application.



In partnership with
Canada