

Propeller Project

Uplift Fund Guidelines

October 2025

Toronto Pearson 

Table of Contents

About the Propeller Project	3
Funding Streams	4
Breaking Down Barriers to Meaningful Employment	5
Growing the Construction Skilled Trades	6
Eligibility & Funding Parameters	7
Application Process	8
Assessment Criteria	9
Expression of Interest Question List	10

About the Propeller Project

At Toronto Pearson, we are committed to being a good neighbour by supporting programs that break down barriers to employment and create opportunities for our surrounding communities. Through strategic investments and partnerships, we help local residents and employers develop new skills, build connections, and access pathways to meaningful careers.

The Uplift Fund, a signature initiative under the Propeller Project, focuses on programs that advance:

- Job seeker support
- Employer engagement and inclusive hiring
- Holistic employment programming

By supporting these initiatives, we aim to:

- Create meaningful job and career growth opportunities
- Facilitate effective employment supports and services for local residents
- Enhance the capacity and sustainability of community partners
- Address systemic barriers contributing to inequalities in the regional economy

Uplift Funding Streams

Applications are accepted year-round beginning October 2025. Funding is available through two streams:

1. Breaking Down Barriers to Meaningful Employment
2. Growing the Construction Skilled Trades

While we welcome applications supporting employment across all sectors, priority will be given to initiatives focused on:

- Construction and General Labour
- Hospitality and Retail
- Transportation and Trucking
- Manufacturing and Warehousing
- Innovation and Technology

Breaking Down Barriers to Meaningful Employment

This stream focuses on projects that support individuals facing barriers to employment, particularly for underrepresented and marginalized groups. These barriers are complex and multi-faceted and include: limited work experience, lack of networks, misalignment of skill/qualifications, credential recognition issues, language and cultural barriers, and a variety of financial/economic pressures.

This funding stream will support a range of initiatives, with an emphasis on new and innovative approaches that strengthen supports and services, including training, counseling, job matching, and post-employment supports, to enable residents to secure meaningful and sustainable employment and develop a more robust, diverse, skilled and reliable talent pipeline that responds to the needs of employers and the economy. This may also include support and skill development to strengthen entrepreneurship.

Growing the Construction Skilled Trades

Recognizing the growing concern about skilled labor shortages in the construction trades and the increasing demand by infrastructure initiatives like Pearson LIFT, this stream targets innovative workforce development projects that can help build a more robust, diverse, and reliable talent pipeline in the construction industry. Key challenges identified include negative perceptions of skilled trades, financial barriers, lack of awareness, and various other systemic issues that deter people, especially youth, newcomers, and women from entering and/or remaining in the construction trades.

This funding stream will support initiatives designed to grow the construction skilled trades talent pipeline. Projects should include a mix of innovative strategies, targeting and supporting progress through different stages of the construction trades career journey, such as awareness-raising programs, navigation support to entry and completion of apprenticeship training, wrap-around supports throughout the training journey, activities to support retention and career growth, employer and union engagement, targeted programming to remove unique barriers for underrepresented groups, etc.

Eligibility & Funding Parameters

To be considered for funding, projects must:

- Directly benefit local residents and/or employers of Brampton, Mississauga and/or Etobicoke
- Be led by a not-for-profit organization, academic institution, or professional association
- Be led by an organization whose mission and core operations focus on employment-related services, workforce development, or career advancement.
- Demonstrate a track record of successful delivery of employment-focused programming for jobseekers/employees, employers/businesses, or both
- Demonstrate community engagement and partnerships that support program delivery and impact

Ineligible Applications

Applications will not be accepted from:

- Individuals
- For-profit businesses
- Private clubs funded through membership fees
- Competitive sports teams
- Religious or politically affiliated organizations or candidates
- Organizations not registered as a not-for-profit or charity
- Trade unions and union-affiliated organizations

The Uplift Fund does not support:

- Events or conferences
- Fundraising activities
- Capital expenses
- Projects operating outside of Canada

Funding Parameters

- Projects must be no longer than one year in duration
- Organizations may request between \$150,000 - \$200,000
- Up to 20% of the total budget may be allocated to organizational overhead
- Funding can support standalone projects, components of larger initiatives, or geographic/programmatic expansions

Application Process

To apply:

- Complete the online Expression of Interest (EOI)
- Selected EOIs will be invited to submit a complete application
- Download and complete the budget template and upload it with your final application submission

Supporting Documents

A maximum of three pages of supporting documents may be included and may include any documents that support the application such as letters of support, evaluation findings, testimonials, etc.

Number of Applications

Organizations may apply for more than one project under either or both funding streams. Organizations are limited to three applications per calendar year.

Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed based on the following:

- Relevance to one or both funding streams.
- Potential for the project to yield sustained community and economic impact.
- Clarity of objectives, outcomes, and evaluation process.
- Clear and balanced budget and workplan.
- Organizational capacity and alignment with employment outcomes and workforce development.
- Inclusion of collaborative and equity-focused approaches.

Expression of Interest Question List

Project Title*

What is the title of the project/initiative you are proposing to the Uplift Fund?

Character Limit: 250

Funding Stream*

Which funding stream are you applying for? (select one)

- Breaking down barriers to meaningful employment
- Growing the construction skilled trades

Project Location(s)*

Projects eligible for funding through the Uplift Fund must take place in Brampton, Etobicoke and/or Mississauga.

Please select the applicable area(s) where your project will take place.

- Brampton
- Mississauga
- Etobicoke

Project Category*

Select the category that best describes your project.

- Continuation of an existing program/initiative
- Expansion/scaling of an existing program/initiative
- New/innovative initiative
- Other

Target Group(s)*

Select the target group(s) for the project

- Jobseekers/employees
- Employers
- Other

Organization Overview*

Provide a brief summary of your organization, including your core mission and history of delivering employment-focused programming. Explain why your experience makes you the ideal organization to deliver this project.

Character limit: 1000

Project Goals*

Describe the main goal(s) of your project and how they align with the funding stream you have selected. Tell us if this is a new or existing project and describe the issue, problem or opportunity that it addresses.

If applying for the Construction Stream:

Include the specific construction skilled trades barriers for the groups you aim to serve and what stage or stages of the skilled trades career journey your project is focused on.

Character Limit: 3000

Project Impacts*

How will you define success for your project and how will you know the proposed project was successful?

Character Limit: 2000

Project Partners*

Who are your partners and collaborators in delivering this project? How they will be involved?

If applying for the Construction Stream:

Please keep in mind that unions, trades associations and employers play a significant role within the construction trades career journey. It would be beneficial for projects to engage these important groups.

Character Limit: 2000

Reminder: Expression of Interest must be submitted online.

Contact

For questions about the Uplift Fund or application support, contact:

propeller.project@gtaa.com

