# Building Safer Communities Grant Program

Application Guidelines

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## About the Building Safer Communities (BSC) Grant Program

To implement Strong Futures: A Community Based Youth Crime Prevention Strategy (https://www.niagararegion.ca/media/anuhufkv/youth-crime-prevention-strategy.pdf) (2026-2029) (Formerly the Guns and Gangs Strategy) Niagara Region will distribute funds to eligible applicants.

The Grant Program will operate over two funding periods with the potential for additional funds related to start-up costs. Funding is subject to annual availability, program requirements, and satisfactory performance.

1. **Year 1 (start-up):** January 2027 to March 2027

2. **Year 2:** April 2027 to March 2028

3. **Year 3:** April 2028 to March 2029

Grants will be awarded to support community-based prevention programs that address upstream violence prevention efforts consistent with Niagara's Strong Futures: A Community Based Youth Crime Prevention Strategy. This strategy and its implementation through the Building Safer Communities Grant Program, aligns with Niagara's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan.

To be considered for funding, programs must:

- Meet all applicant eligibility criteria outlined in the application guidelines (see page 6)
- Support children, youth and/or young adults (ages 6-26) in evidence-based crime prevention programs
- Demonstrate alignment with up to three programs area of focus identified in the Strong Futures: A Community Based Youth Crime Prevention Strategy
- Demonstrate an impact to increasing protective factors and/or decreasing risk factors for the target population
- Demonstrate a trauma-informed approach to the delivery of service
- Deliver all services free of charge/at no cost to program participants
- Ensure equitable and inclusive service delivery to support diverse and/or marginalized populations

For more information about local needs associated with protective and risk factors, program areas of focus for targeted investment, and best or promising practices for crime prevention programs aimed at children, youth and young adults (ages 6-26), please refer to the Strong Futures: A Community Based Youth Crime Prevention Strategy posted on the Building Safer Communities Grant Program | Niagara Region (https://www.niagararegion.ca/government-and-council/service-providers-and-partners/building-safer-communities-grant-program/)

## Supporting Evidence and Local Context

The Guns and Gangs Prevention Strategy has been replaced by, and rebranded as, Strong Futures: A Youth Crime Prevention Strategy to reflect a broader, strengths-based focus on youth well-being, early intervention, prevention, and safer communities.

While the strategy has transitioned to Strong Futures, the original research, local data, community engagement findings, and evidence remain relevant. This body of knowledge continues to inform the priorities, areas of focus, and prevention approach of Strong Futures. Where referenced in these guidelines or application materials, the Guns and Gangs Prevention Strategy refers to this supporting body of knowledge.

Applicants may refer to the evidence, findings, and local community engagement data in the original Guns and Gangs Prevention Strategy when describing the need for their proposed program and demonstrating how planned activities will reduce risk factors and/or strengthen protective factors for the intended population. Applicants are also encouraged to supplement this information with current local data, community knowledge, participant input, and relevant research, where available.

Where these guidelines or application materials refer to the Guns and Gangs Prevention Strategy, this refers to the original research, local data, and community engagement findings that now inform Strong Futures: A Youth Crime Prevention Strategy.

## Important Dates

Application Intake Opening: Monday, October 19, 2026

Application Intake Deadline: Friday, November 13, 2026, by 4:30 p.m.

Information Sessions for Grant Applicants

Applicants are encouraged to attend an information session to learn more about the program and the application process.

- Session 1: Tuesday, October 27, 2026, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. (In Person)
- Session 2: Thursday, October 29, 2026, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. (Virtual)

To attend a session, please email CSWB@niagararegion.ca.

Funding decisions will be communicated by the end of 2026. It is anticipated that agreements will be issued to applicants approved for funding by January 2027. Please note that dates are subject to change at the discretion of Niagara Region.

## Eligible Programs

Proposed programs must provide services aimed at engaging children, youth and/or young adults (ages 6-26) in evidence-based crime prevention activities.

### Alignment to Prevention Program Areas

1. Proposed programs must deliver services that engage children, youth and/or young adults aged 6–26 in evidence-based crime prevention activities. While programs may contribute indirectly to several of Niagara's priority areas, applicants must demonstrate alignment with at least one defined priority listed below. Please select up to three areas where the proposed program is expected to have its primary impact.

   Please note that this question is intended to identify your program's primary focus and its alignment with the **Strong Futures Strategy**. Selecting multiple areas of focus does not equate to a higher application score; proposals with a single, clearly demonstrated primary focus will be assessed equally.

   - Increase emotional regulation skills or the social-emotional competency of children and their parents
   - Increase positive attachment to school and improve access to post-secondary education
   - Prevent youth homelessness
   - Support the early identification and treatment of mental health concerns for children and youth
   - Provide mentoring or connection to positive peers or caring adults
   - Develop youth conflict resolution skills and/or enable alternative dispute resolution
   - Connect Indigenous youth and their families with traditional healing and cultural activities
   - Provide substance use / addiction treatment for youth
   - Intervene or prevent youth involvement in human trafficking
   - Support Black and racialized youth with a positive sense of community belonging

For more information about targeted program areas of focus, applicants are encouraged to review the Strong Futures: Youth Crime Prevention Strategy posted on the Building Safer Communities Grant Program | Niagara Region (https://www.niagararegion.ca/government-and-council/service-providers-and-partners/building-safer-communities-grant-program/)

### Program Types

The BSC Grant Program may support new programs or existing programs with incremental changes. Funding cannot be used to support current programs and ongoing core operations as they exist currently. If applicants are seeking funding for an existing program, they must explain the existing program as well as identify how the proposal is implementing a new activity or change.

## Risk and Protective Factors

All proposed programs must demonstrate an impact in increasing protective factors and/or decreasing risk factors for the intended target population.

Risk factors are negative circumstances in the lives of people or communities. These may increase the likelihood that individuals engage in crime. For example:

- Lack of positive adult role models
- Low self-esteem
- Substance use
- Family violence

Protective factors are positive circumstances that may help improve the lives of people and safety of communities. These may reduce the likelihood that individuals engage in crime. For example:

- Good mental, physical, spiritual and emotional health
- Strong social supports
- Positive school attachment
- Stable housing

## Gender-Based Plus Analysis (GBA)

Applicants are expected to apply a gender-based and intersectional analysis throughout the development, delivery, and evaluation of their proposed program. This approach recognizes that residents may experience safety and well-being concerns, barriers to services, and program benefits differently depending on their gender and other intersecting identities and circumstances.

Applicants should consider how overlapping factors—such as age, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, Indigenous Identity, disability, income, housing status, newcomer or immigration status, language, geographic location, and experiences of violence or marginalization—may affect an individual's exposure to risk factors, access to protective factors, and ability to participate in the proposed program.

This analysis should be grounded in local evidence, community knowledge, and meaningful engagement with the population(s) the program intends to serve.

Applicants should provide specific examples in their answers of how Diversity Equite and Inclusion (DEI) and GBA Plus will inform:

- Program activities, content, and delivery methods
- Outreach, referral, and participant recruitment approaches
- Accessibility and measures to reduce barriers to participation
- Culturally safe, inclusive, equitable, and responsive supports for priority populations
- How participant feedback will be gathered and used to improve or adapt services throughout the program

Applicants are encouraged to complete and apply learning from the Government of Canada's Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) training (https://www.canada.ca/en/women-gender-equality/gender-based-analysis-plus.html). The training may support applicants in identifying barriers, developing responsive program activities, and demonstrating how the proposed program will advance equitable safety and well-being outcomes.

Applicants must move beyond identifying priority populations and explain how the proposed program has been designed to respond to their distinct experiences, needs, barriers, strengths, and safety considerations. General statements of inclusion without specific program design measures may not be sufficient to demonstrate a gender-based and intersectional approach.

## Target Population

### Age

Programs must target children, youth and/or young adults who are 6-26 years old. Proposals must identify one or more age categories that they plan to serve within their program: 6-11 years old, 12-17 years old and/or 18-26 years old.

## Level of Need

Proposed programs should target youth with multiple risk factors (which could be otherwise understood as a high need population) or youth with at least one risk factor (a medium need population). Population-based interventions which target youth broadly are discouraged due to the limited funding available within this grant program.

## Priority Populations

Programs are encouraged to target priority populations, which include girls/young women, Indigenous youth, Black youth and newcomer youth, as these populations are disproportionately at risk for harm, crime or victimization.

## Workplan

Complete the work plan template to identify how you will deliver the program you have proposed in Section 3, in terms of program goals, key activities, specific targets and evaluation methods. If the application is approved for funding, the work plan will be used to establish accountability requirements in a funding agreement.

- Program goals: Provide a brief description of each key goal the funding request is intended to achieve. Goal statements should make direct reference to the prevention program areas identified in Section 2 of this application.
- Key activities: Essential tasks that are needed to achieve the stated goal(s). Key activities are the steps you will take to ensure your goal is achieved.
- Specific targets: Results the program will achieve through the key activities. Targets should demonstrate the impact the program is intended to achieve for clients or the community. Targets should be specific, measurable and achievable within the funding period.
- Evaluation methods: How will the organization measure progress towards specific targets? How will you identify areas of improvement not only after, but during the program? This can include both quantitative and qualitative methods. Be as specific as possible e.g., if you plan to use a validated survey tool, name the tool.

Consider the following targets and how you will evaluate them:

- Number of unique people served in each age group
- Number of caregivers, or family members engaged through program activities
- Number of youth experts engaged in planning or program delivery
- Number of referrals made to relevant health, social, educational, cultural, employment, housing, or justice-related supports.
- Percentage of referred participants who report successfully connecting to at least one identified support or service.

- Percentage or number of participants who complete a defined level of program participation—for example, attend at least 75 per cent of sessions or complete a program cycle.
- Percentage of participants reporting increased confidence in seeking help when needed.
- Percentage of participants reporting increased access to at least one positive adult, mentor, cultural support, or trusted support person.
- Percentage of participants reporting increased knowledge of available community supports and how to access them.
- Number of partnerships established or strengthened to support coordinated referrals or service delivery.
- Number of community agencies, schools, cultural organizations, or other partners engaged in program implementation.
- Number or percentage of participants accessing accommodations or supports that reduce barriers to participation, such as transportation, child care, food, accessibility supports, interpretation, culturally responsive programming, or flexible scheduling.
- Percentage of participants reporting that program staff and spaces were welcoming, respectful, inclusive, culturally safe, and responsive to their needs.
- Number of program adjustments made in response to participant feedback, attendance patterns, access barriers, or outcome data.
- Number of staff and volunteers completing relevant training, such as trauma-informed practice, anti-racism, cultural safety, gender-based violence, de-escalation, or gender-based and intersectional analysis.

Applicants are encouraged to use a combination of outputs (for example, number of participants served or sessions delivered) and outcomes (for example, changes in participants' knowledge, skills, connections, confidence, or access to supports). Wherever feasible, applicants should collect feedback at more than one point during the program to support continuous improvement.

## Funding Limit

Applications to the BSC Grant Program may request up to **$100,000 annually for two funding periods** with the potential for additional funds related to start up costs up to $25,000.

- **Year 1 (Start up maximum $25,000):** January 2027 to March 2027
- **Year 2 (maximum $100,000):** April 2027 to March 2028
- **Year 3 (maximum $100,000):** April 2028 to March 2029

## Individual and Collaborative Applications

Niagara Region encourages collaborative applications that demonstrate a coordinated, integrated or collective impact approach to meet community needs. Collaborative applications refer to when two or more organizations with a well-defined relationship apply for funding to achieve a common goal; with one of the organizations taking the lead and being fully accountable for the delivery of the proposal. Characteristics of well-defined relationships may include mutual benefit, shared organization decision-making and accountability to partners and the communities they serve.

Organizations may only be the lead applicant and submit one project, but there is no limit to the number of projects an organization can be listed on as a supporting partner. Each proposed project requires a separate application and a letter of support from any identified partners to confirm their commitment to the project in order to be considered.

Grassroots organizations may only act as a supporting partner in collaborative applications.

## Submission Instructions and Contents

Applicants must submit their application using the Good Grants online platform available at https://niagararegion.grantplatform.com/. Applications must be received by 4:30 p.m. EST on Friday November 13, 2026.

Some considerations as you prepare your submission:

- Applicants may be requested to modify their program proposal at the discretion of Regional staff.
- Applications can include operational/administrative costs and capital items/equipment required to implement and deliver the program or improve service delivery.[1]
- It is recommended that administrative costs not exceed 10 per cent of the overall request.

The Application submission on Good Grants must include the following:

- Completed Building Safer Communities Grant Application Form. All sections must be completed. Incomplete applications may be deemed ineligible.

[1] Note: The Region reserves the right to direct successful grant recipients to sell, transfer or request recipients to redirect or otherwise justify the use of capital assets following the end of the program.

- Quotes (if applicable): Three quotes/prices must be provided if the submission includes capital equipment or other capital items (including computers) where the dollar value of these items total $2,000 or more.
- Letter(s) of Support (if applicable): Letters of support are required from all supporting partners (such as those who provide free space and/or are essential for the delivery of the program).

Note: If approved for a grant, applicants will be required to provide proof of insurance before funds will be issued. Applicants may also be required to provide financial statements. These materials are not required with the application submission.

## Eligibility Criteria

To be considered for funding, applicants must meet all the following criteria:

- Incorporated as a non-profit organization, registered charity, or be an urban off-reserve Indigenous-led organization; and have been in existence for a minimum of one year. Grassroots groups are encouraged to apply as a supporting partner within a collaborative grant application.
- Governed by a volunteer board of directors that is democratically elected, active, with a minimum of three members not related by blood or marriage.
- Provide financial statements signed by at least one director of the organization for the most recent fiscal year end and include comparative information for the prior fiscal year, upon request[2]:
    - Organizations with annual revenues of over $500,000 in the most recent fiscal year may be required to submit financial statements that have been audited by a licensed public accountant.
    - Organizations with annual revenues between $100,000 - $500,000 in the most recent fiscal year may be required to submit financial statements that have been subjected to a review engagement by a licensed public accountant provided that an extraordinary resolution according to the Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act has been passed by its members to have a review engagement instead of an audit.
    - Organizations with revenues of less than $100,000 may be required to submit internally prepared financial statements that include a statement of revenues and expenses and a balance sheet for the most recent fiscal year provided that an extraordinary resolution according to the Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act has been passed by its members to not appoint an auditor and to not have an audit or review engagement.

[2] If these are not available, alternative financial documents may be considered at the sole discretion of Niagara Region.

- Shall not be or have not been indebted to the Region or be in default of the terms and conditions of any agreement with Niagara Region.
- Provide information that demonstrates it does not, in the absence of the grant, have the financial resources necessary to undertake the activity for which the grant is requested.
- Submit a completed application form and confirm that all information provided in the application form and related documents is true, correct and complete, as verified by an authorized official of the organization.
- Must be willing to enter into and comply with a funding agreement in the form provided by Niagara Region.

The program for which funds are requested must:

- Support children, youth and/or young adults (ages 6-26) in evidence-based crime prevention activities
- Demonstrate alignment with up to three identified program areas of focus
- Demonstrate an impact to increasing protective factors and/or decreasing risk factors for the target population
- Ensure equitable and inclusive service delivery to support diverse and/or marginalized populations
- Provide services to Niagara residents within the boundaries of the Niagara region
- Provide all services free of charge/at no cost to program participants
- Possess minimum insurance requirements, as detailed below[3]:
    - Commercial General Liability (CGL) Policy with coverage of a minimum of $2 million per occurrence, including Non-Owned Automobile Liability. The CGL Policy shall not contain a sexual abuse and molestation exclusion and shall provide a limit of liability for this coverage of not less than $2 million per occurrence.
    - If applicable, Owned Automobile Liability insurance (minimum of $2 million per occurrence).
    - If applicable, Professional/Errors and Omissions Liability insurance (minimum of $2 million per claim).
    - Applicants are encouraged, and may be required, to have Employee Dishonesty Coverage or a Comprehensive/Commercial Crime Policy.
    - Organizations approved for funding must add The Regional Municipality of Niagara as an additional insured under the organization’s CGL policy.

[3] Additional insurance requirements may be required at the sole discretion of the Region. A funding agreement will not be issued until all insurance requirements are met.

    - Certificates of Insurance must be on Niagara Region's Certificate of Insurance Forms. (https://www.niagararegion.ca/business-and-development/suppliers-and-contractors/supplier-resources/)
- Ensure that each employee of the organization working directly with, or that may come into contact with children and youth has provided a criminal record check, including a vulnerable sector screen, conducted by a police force within six (6) months before commencing work pursuant to the proposal; and ensure that each employee or agent of the organization has provided to the organization, prior to the employee commencing work pursuant to the proposal, a signed declaration, in a form satisfactory to Niagara Region, with respect to the period since the date of the last criminal reference check. The organization shall retain all record checks and declarations and make same available to Niagara Region. This requirement shall not impose any obligation upon Niagara Region to request copies of these documents and the organization accepts full responsibility in this regard.
- Operate in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code.
- Be compliant with all applicable rules, regulations and laws of the Government of Canada and the Province of Ontario, including those which apply to the regulation of non-profit corporations.

The following types of requests will not be considered:

- Programs or activities that do not directly benefit residents of Niagara Region
- Programs or activities that do not occur within the boundaries of Niagara region
- Purchases of property.
- Financing charges, interest payments on loans, real estate fees, legal fees and costs related to easements (for example, land surveys).
- Requests that will be used to establish/contribute to a fund within an organization for the purpose of funding individuals and/or other organizations/programs.
- Events where competition is the focus, including awards/prizes.
- Debt retirement, depreciation or deficit funding.
- Mandated government services.
- Projects/programs which are primarily or fully funded or delivered by municipalities including parks and recreation, transportation and economic development.

## Outreach and Engagement

To support the promotion of this grant application opportunity to a wide and diverse audience, information will be shared using several different tactics.

### Traditional Media

In an effort to ensure traditional media outlets can re-circulate the funding announcement, a media release will be issued on behalf of Niagara Region to announce the successful applicants.

### Social Media

To support the digital traffic of the media release, Niagara Region will use its social media accounts to prompt followers to view the information.

### Email Distribution

Staff will coordinate announcements through email, leveraging existing Community Safety and Well-Being mailing lists, and email distribution lists from local planning tables and foundations across service sectors. All messaging will encourage individuals and organizations to utilize their email distribution networks to share the announcements to ensure the funding opportunity reaches a diverse audience.

### Public Information Sessions

As a part of the above communications, applicants will be encouraged to attend an information session to learn more about the program and the application process.

- Session 1: Tuesday, October 27, 2026, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. (In-Person)
- Session 2: Thursday, October 29, 2026, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. (Virtual)

## Application Review

Applications deemed eligible by Regional Staff based on the application guidelines will be reviewed by the Building Safer Communities Fund (BSCF) Grant Selection Panel.

The Grant Selection Panel, consisting of Staff, community members and subject matter experts, will make funding recommendations. Panel members will be selected on the basis of expertise, including lived expertise, and shall reflect the diversity of Niagara region.

Grant selection panelists will use a standardized scoring matrix based on the application guidelines to review applications (see Appendix A: Scoring Matrix) and will consider the potential impact of the program, evidence of the need and other factors determined appropriate by the Region.  Applicants are encouraged to review the Scoring Matrix in completing their proposal to ensure that they have fully addressed the review criteria.

Niagara Region reserves the right for Staff to consider information outside of the funding application and follow-up with applicants for additional information to inform the review process, including but not limited to related to eligibility.

## Awarding and Post-Award Feedback

Funding recommendations put forward by the Grant Selection Panel, based on highest scoring applications, will be provided to the Commissioner of Community Services for consideration and approval.

All grant applicants will be notified if their application was approved or declined for funding. The Region shall determine the amount of funding to be distributed to applicants that are approved for funding. The Region may award the entire amount of funding requested or only a portion of the amount requested. Submission of an application does not constitute a guarantee of funding.

All applicants shall be informed that they can request a follow-up meeting with program staff regarding the outcome of their grant application. Applicants will be provided with the ability to meet with program staff involved in the review process to receive feedback on their application, including the decision rationale.

After this preliminary meeting, grant applicants who wish for additional clarification on the outcome of their application will be provided the opportunity to escalate their concerns to the Commissioner of Community Services, who is not a member of the initial BSCF Grant Selection Panel, through a secondary meeting. Decisions made by the Commissioner are final and are not subject to further review.

## Funding Agreement

Niagara Region will issue a funding agreement to applicants approved for funding. The agreement outlines the funding relationship, including the conditions of funding, the approved use of funds, targets/outcomes and reporting requirements. Reporting requirements include quarterly progress update, financial update and an annual evaluation report, as well as any additional requirements determined by the Region (including to support a public report to Regional Council on the outcome of the Program) and/or funding partners. Funding will only be issued when an agreement is executed. The applicant will not be reimbursed for any expenses incurred prior to the funding period identified in the Funding Agreement. The agreement will fully define the terms and conditions of funding.

## Conflict of Interest

Applicants are required to avoid placing themselves in situations where their personal interests actually or potentially conflict with the interests of the Region.  In this regard, applicants are expected at minimum to:

- Not take part in, or in any way influence, any Regional decision that might result in a financial or other advantage, whether direct or indirect, related to this application process and any subsequent agreement;
- Not attempt to gain an improper advantage or preferential treatment from the Grant Selection Panel or Regional employees;
- Provide any personal benefit, gifts or hospitality to employees of the Region or the Grant Selection Panel.

Applicants are required to disclose to the Region any situation that could result in an actual or perceived conflict of interest. Any questions or disclosures related to conflicts of interest should be directed to CSWB@niagararegion.ca.

## Notice of Collection

Information collected on grant applications will be used determine eligibility for the BSC Grant Program and to administer and report publicly (including to Regional Council) on the outcome of the Program as stated in these Guidelines. Information collected may also be used for statistical and data analytical purposes and may also be disclosed if requested in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. For questions about the collection, use and disclosure of information, contact CSWB@niagararegion.ca.

## Accessibility Assistance

If you require this information in an alternate format or through a communication support, or if you require assistance to complete the application, please contact CSWB@niagararegion.ca.

## Regional Discretion

Niagara Region reserves the right to modify requirements/criteria within these Guidelines at its sole discretion.

## Questions and Contact Information

Questions can be submitted to the Community Safety and Well-Being team in the Community Services Department at CSWB@niagararegion.ca.

Building Safer Communities Grant Program: Scoring Matrix

Table 1: Scoring matrix aligned to the draft application form. Reviewers should score each review criterion as High (4–5), Medium (2–3), or Low (0–1).

| **Review Criteria** | **High (4-5)** | **Medium (2-3)** | **Low (0-1)** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Section 3; Q1: Organization overview | Applicant provides a clear overview of the organization, including mandate, mission, service area, and relevance to the proposed program. | Applicant provides a general organizational overview, but some information about mandate, service area, experience, or fit with the proposed program is incomplete or unclear. | Organizational overview is unclear, incomplete, or does not demonstrate relevance to the proposed program. |
| Section 3; Q2: Proposed program summary | Program summary is clear, concise, and complete. It explains what the project will do, how it will be implemented, and how it addresses the selected priority area(s) from Strong Futures: A Community Based Youth Crime Prevention Strategy. | Program summary is generally understandable, but some details about implementation, activities, or alignment to selected priority area(s) are missing or unclear. | Program summary is vague, incomplete, or does not explain what the project will do or how it aligns with selected priority area(s). |

| Review Criteria | High (4-5) | Medium (2-3) | Low (0-1) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Section 3;Q3: Residents/population to be served with DEI/ GBA lens. | Applicant clearly identifies the residents the program is intended to serve and demonstrates a strong understanding of the target population. Response includes relevant demographic and sociodemographic characteristics, clearly identifies applicable participant age group(s) (6–11, 12–17, and/or 18–26), and specifies priority population(s) to be served, where applicable. The target population is well aligned with the proposed program activities and intended outcomes. | Applicant identifies a target population and applicable age group(s), but the description of demographic characteristics, priority populations, or the connection to program activities is general, incomplete, or somewhat unclear. | Applicant does not clearly identify the target population or participant age group(s). Relevant demographic characteristics and/or priority populations are missing, unclear, or not aligned with the proposed program. |

| Criteria | High (4-5) | Medium (2-3) | Low (0-1) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Section 3; Q4: DEI and GBA Plus Principles | Applicant provides a clear and specific description of how DEI principles and a GBA Plus lens will be incorporated into program design and delivery. Response demonstrates a strong understanding of the differing needs, experiences, barriers, and opportunities of intended participants, including relevant identity factors and circumstances. Applicant provides practical examples of how the program will reduce barriers and support equitable, inclusive, accessible, and culturally safe participation. | Applicant demonstrates a general understanding of DEI principles and/or GBA Plus and identifies some participant needs or barriers. However, the response provides limited detail, few practical examples, or an unclear explanation of how these considerations will be incorporated into program design and delivery. | Applicant provides little or no evidence of how DEI principles or a GBA Plus lens will inform the program. Participant needs, barriers, and relevant identity factors are not considered, are vague, or are not connected to program design and delivery. |

| Criteria | High (4-5) | Medium (2-3) | Low (0-1) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Section 3; Q4: Reducing barriers to participation | Identifies relevant barriers to participation and provides clear, practical supports or accommodations that are appropriate for the target population and program delivery. | Identifies some barriers and proposed supports, but the response lacks detail or does not clearly demonstrate how supports address participant needs. | Provides limited or no information about barriers or supports. Proposed supports are vague, not feasible, or not responsive to participant needs. |
| Section 3; Q5: Trauma-informed and strengths-based service delivery | Demonstrates a clear understanding of trauma-informed and strengths-based practice, including how adverse childhood experiences may affect participation. Provides specific, practical measures to promote participant safety, choice, trust, resilience, and safe access to the program | Demonstrates a general understanding of trauma-informed or strengths-based practice and identifies some relevant supports; however, the response lacks detail or does not clearly connect adverse childhood experiences to program participation and safety. | Provides limited or no evidence of a trauma-informed or strengths-based approach. Does not adequately address the potential impact of adverse childhood experiences or how participants will safely access the program. |

| Criteria | High (4-5) | Medium (2-3) | Low (0-1) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Section 3; Q6: Anticipated program impact | Proposal clearly describes realistic and meaningful benefits, supported by evidence, best practices, or promising practices. It explains how the program will enhance protective factors and/or reduce risk factors related to youth crime prevention. | Proposal describes anticipated benefits, but the connection to evidence, best practices or promising practices lack specific detail. The explanation about how the program will enhance protective factors, risk factors, or youth crime prevention is general or incomplete. | Proposal does not clearly describe expected impact or does not demonstrate how the program will contribute to youth crime prevention outcomes. |
| Section 3; Q8: Leveraging local assets and organizational experience | Clearly identifies relevant local assets, partnerships, community resources, and organizational experience. Demonstrates how these strengths will support effective program delivery and positive participant outcomes. | Identifies some relevant assets, partnerships, resources, or experience, but the connection to program delivery or participant outcomes is limited or unclear. | Provides limited, unclear, or no information about local assets, partnerships, resources, or organizational experience. Does not demonstrate how these strengths will support the proposed program. |

| Criteria | High (4-5) | Medium (2-3) | Low (0-1) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Section 5: Budget Information | Budget is complete, clear, and reasonable. Costs are well justified, align with program activities, meet funding requirements, and are appropriately allocated across the funding period. | Budget is generally reasonable and aligned with the program, but some costs, descriptions, calculations, or requirements need clarification. | Budget is incomplete, unclear, unreasonable, or does not demonstrate alignment with the proposed program or funding requirements. |
| Section 4: Collaborative applications and partner roles | Collaborating partners are clearly identified, and roles, contributions, partnership status, and letters of support are appropriate. Partnerships appear meaningful and relevant to planning, delivery, referrals, evaluation, or sustainability. | Some partnerships are identified, but partner roles, contributions, status, or letter of support require clarification. Collaboration appears helpful but not fully developed. | No partnerships are identified or partnership information is incomplete, unclear, or not meaningful. Required letters of support appear to be missing where partners are essential to delivery. |

| Criteria | High (4-5) | Medium (2-3) | Low (0-1) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Section 6: Work plan - program goals<br>Specific, Measurable, Achievable Realistic and Time Sensitive | Goals are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound-sensitive) and directly connected to the program areas. | Goals reflect some SMART elements, but may be broad, difficult to measure, missing timelines, or only partly aligned with the proposed program. | Goals are unclear, incomplete, not measurable, lack timelines, or do not align with the proposed program.. |
| Section 6: Work plan - key activities | Key activities are specific, feasible, and sufficient to achieve the stated goals within the funding period. | Key activities are generally appropriate, but some steps, sequencing, or implementation details are missing. | Key activities are unclear, incomplete, unrealistic, or insufficient to achieve the stated goals. |
| Section 6: Work plan - specific targets | Targets are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. They demonstrate intended impact for participants or the community. | Targets are included but require more specificity, measurability, or alignment with the goals and activities. | Targets are missing, unclear, not measurable, or not realistic within the funding period. |

| Criteria | High (4-5) | Medium (2-3) | Low (0-1) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Section 6: Work plan - evaluation methods | Evaluation methods are appropriate and include clear quantitative and/or qualitative measures to track progress, identify improvements, and report on outcomes during and after implementation. | Evaluation methods are included but require more detail, stronger alignment with targets, or clearer data collection methods. | Evaluation methods are missing, unclear, or not appropriate for measuring progress and outcomes. |