

Letter of Intent and full proposal user guide

Updated: September 2025

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1 Introduction to the WCB Grants Program

1.1 Workers Compensation Board of Manitoba Grants Program

The Workers Compensation Board of Manitoba serves workers and employers through a no-fault insurance system integral to the Manitoba economy. Funded by employers, the WCB promotes safe and healthy workplaces, facilitates recovery and return to work, delivers compassionate and supportive compensation services to workers and employers, and ensures responsible stewardship of Manitoba's workers compensation system.

Working with our partners, the WCB promotes safe and healthy workplaces while facilitating recovery and return to work.

The WCB Grants Program supports projects aimed at improving workplace health and safety, reducing the impact of workplace injuries and illness and enhancing the effectiveness of the workers' compensation system in Manitoba.

The WCB Grants Program's main objectives are:

- Advance the knowledge of workplace injuries and illnesses, and workers' compensation.
- Develop collaborative research partnerships.
- Promote practical solutions with potential to reduce the impact of injuries and illness and improve return to work outcomes.
- Evaluate interventions, inform policy development and support innovation.

The Grants Program guide establishes the framework for the administration and management of the WCB Grants Program. The guide outlines the WCB's approach to funding the WCB Grants Program and describes the program's mandate, qualifying criteria, and terms and conditions of funding. The guide also enables the WCB to give priority to projects that have:

- relevance to Manitoba

- potential for positive system impacts or outcomes (e.g., reduce injury or illness impacts)
- probability of being applied meaningfully in workplaces
- stakeholder support
- an appropriate methodology, with qualified and experienced people
- a feasible project plan and timeline
- an appropriate budget with demonstrated financial controls

1.2 Funding priorities

The program supports high-quality projects in the general area of work-related illness and injury and workers' compensation. Funding priorities can change over time, but the types of projects typically given priority are those that address the most pressing issues facing the workers' compensation system in Manitoba at any given time.

The WCB may initiate projects to address specific strategic priority areas or engage in partnerships on projects of mutual interest. Proponents should consult the WCB website for the most up-to-date information on WCB priorities.

Broad funding priorities include:

- Efficacy, fairness and responsiveness of the workers' compensation system.
- The future of work and the changing nature of claims.
- Return to work.
- Reducing the impact of injury and illness (includes prevention).

2 Overview of the grant process

The WCB Grants Program is a competitive, merit-based grants program. Applications are subject to rigorous and transparent independent evaluation.

Grant process timeline:

Call for Letter of Intent (LOI)	First business day in October
Closing date for LOI	Mid-November
LOI review and full proposal invite	Mid-January
Closing date for full proposals	Mid-February
Internal review of full proposal	Mid-February to Mid-April
Closing date for applicant follow-up questions	Third week in May
Funding decision	End of June
Applicants notified of funding decision	June/July
Negotiation of funding agreement	July/September

2.1 Submission of Letter of Intent (LOI)

LOI's must be submitted online by 4 PM CST on the closing date.

LOI's must be complete and consider the objectives and funding priorities established for the WCB Grants Program. The WCB may request clarification about any submitted LOI's.

An applicant can submit multiple LOI's for funding under the Grants Program. LOI's sent by fax or regular mail will not be accepted.

2.2 Preliminary review of LOI's

The WCB will conduct a preliminary review of all submitted letters of intent.

LOI's may be screened out if they are incomplete, or the principal applicant(s) / co-applicant(s) have a history of default with WCB grant funding.

2.3 Evaluation of LOI and invitation to submit a full proposal

The WCB's Executive Management Committee reviews and evaluates the LOI's received based on established criteria and priorities.

LOI's that pass the WCB's preliminary review will then be invited to submit a full proposal.

LOI's may be screened out if they are incomplete, or the principal applicant(s) / co-applicant(s) have a history of default with grant funding.

If the LOI does not pass the preliminary review, the principal applicant(s) will be advised in writing that it will not be considered in the current year's grants competition.

2.4 Drafting your LOI

Current contact information must be included for the applicant(s). The primary contact person for the project may be one of the principal applicants or may be another individual (e.g., a research coordinator).

2.4.1 Identify priority area(s)

From the four priorities listed, indicate the area(s) your project most aligns with.

2.4.2 Brief description of proposed project and purpose

State a clear definition of your project's purpose. Include your project theme and goal with an explanation of the need for the project and expected benefits. Describe how the project fits with WCB's funding priorities and our main objectives.

2.4.3 Brief description of project objectives and outcomes

Outline your project objectives. Provide clear, concise statements about the anticipated outcomes of your proposed project and how these anticipated outcomes will reduce the impact of workplace illness and injury and how they support the strategic interests of the Manitoba workers' compensation system. Explain whether or how your project will add to existing knowledge or create value. Please include a brief statement regarding possible targets and strategies for sharing research findings once your project is complete.

2.4.4 Methodology

Describe the approach you plan to take to conduct your project. Provide details as to the assessment instruments, surveys, questionnaires, blinding techniques and/or statistical methods you will use. Describe how the study population will be selected. For randomized studies, provide justification for the sample size and the expected power of the results. Provide an approximate timeline for the proposed project.

2.4.5 Brief description of WCB data requirements

If the applicant intends to use WCB data in the proposed project, specify the data elements you require, why you require this data and how you plan to gather it. Also, describe any safeguards you will use to protect sensitive data. Be as specific as possible about the data required and the sources. If you require data from WCB of Manitoba, explain what data is required and why the project cannot be accomplished without it. The WCB Grants Program cannot guarantee the availability of all required data and cannot guarantee that we will have the capacity to consult on/assist with data gathering or analysis.

Please note that WCB data is restricted to aggregate, anonymous data only. All data provided is subject to the protection and disclosure provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FIPPA)* Act and our own disclosure policy, at minimum.

2.4.6 Supporting organizations and/or individuals

Please include the names, addresses and telephone numbers or email addresses of all organizations or individuals who recognize and support the

need for this project. Please attach a signed letter of support for all organizations or individuals identified in this section.

2.4.7 Estimated project costs

Submit all estimated costs for the project with as much detail as possible. If applicable, describe how costs could be shared with an additional funding source.

2.4.8 Additional information

Please tell us how you became aware of the WCB Grants Program and if it is your first time applying for a WCB grant.

2.4.9 Attachments

Other information, such as letters of support from an individual or organization, or survey instruments, may also be attached. Please include an appropriately formatted citation/reference list if works are referenced in the body of your LOI.

2.5 Submission of full proposal

Full proposals must be submitted by email to Grants@wcb.mb.ca by **4 PM CST on the closing date**.

Full proposals must be complete and should consider the objectives and funding priorities established for the Grants Program. The WCB may request clarification about any submitted full proposal.

Applications sent by fax or regular mail will not be accepted.

2.6 Preliminary review of full proposal

The WCB will conduct a preliminary review of all submitted proposals.

Proposals may be screened out if they are incomplete, or the principal applicant(s) / co-applicant(s) have a history of default with the grant funding.

If the application does not pass the preliminary review, the principal applicant(s) will be advised in writing that it will not be considered for the current year's grants competition.

2.7 Evaluation of applications

All applications that pass the preliminary review will be evaluated by the WCB using the established evaluation criteria.

2.8 Resources

2.8.1 Links to WCB websites

Browse the WCB's website (www.wcb.mb.ca) for information related to grants, injury statistics and resources related to injury prevention and industry/occupational specific topics.

2.8.2 Access to WCB data

Should data be required from the WCB's database to complete a grant application or while working on a funded project, it may be released subject to the provisions in WCB Policy 21.50., *Information Protection, Access and Disclosure*.

To request access to WCB data, contact grants@wcb.mb.ca and specify what data is needed and what the data will be used for. The WCB cannot guarantee the availability of all data requested.

Funded projects requiring data from the WCB will need to sign a Data Sharing Agreement.

3 Full proposal instructions

3.1 Project information

Complete this section of the Full Proposal by providing the information requested, where applicable.

Refer to the [Grants Program guide](#) for guidance.

3.2 Project support

Successful projects are supported by the key stakeholders involved or affected. A proposal that includes support from all affected parties is looked upon favourably.

Depending on the nature of the project, this may include:

- industry (a safety association, Industry-Based Safety Program or industry association)
- employer (or group of employers)
- labour organizations (union, professional group, etc.)
- Workplace Safety & Health Committee(s)
- other supporters

In addition to providing the reasons for their support of the project, ensure the letter of support also includes:

- name of organization
- name and title of representative/contact
- business mailing address
- telephone number
- email address
- representative's signature with date

Signed letters confirming the support of this project should be provided to the WCB with the LOI and full proposal

3.3 Project details

3.3.1 *Project description*

Provide a comprehensive description of the project, including:

- the objectives, goals and target group(s) for the project.
- the expected results and outcomes.
- the expected benefit to Manitoba workers, employers, workplaces, industry sectors or occupational groups.
- the project's relevance to the strategic priorities of the WCB and SAFE Work Manitoba.

Depending on the project scope, also include within the description:

- the core content, structure, design and mode(s) of delivery.
 - the target group or audience and rationale for selecting the group or audience.
 - how current training and education gaps will be addressed.
 - how the project meets or exceeds the current training or education standards in Manitoba.
 - the workplace safety and health issues to be addressed.
 - how the project will change and improve occupational health and safety of specific workplace(s) and/or foster rehabilitation and return to work (RTW) of injured workers.
- What does a successful project look like for you and how do you intend to measure that success?

3.3.2 *Project impact measures*

Outline how the completed project will impact the WCB's stakeholders:

- Who will be impacted?
 - workers in a specific industry, occupation, employer, etc.
 - all employers, a specific employer or employers in a specific industry
 - an industry or group of industries
 - other

- How will they be impacted?
 - fewer injuries
 - less severe injuries
 - less time missed
 - lower costs
 - other
- Describe how you plan to measure the impact; what are the steps you will take to measure the outcome of your study? (be as specific as possible)

Examples of project impact measures could be:

"It is anticipated that this employer will see a reduction of 50 per cent in the number of these types of injuries annually."

"We believe the injured workers in this occupation will return to work 3 days earlier (on average) after experiencing this specific injury type."

"We project that there will be 5 per cent fewer time-loss injuries to workers in these industries."

3.3.3 Knowledge Transfer and Exchange ("KTE")

An ongoing objective of the WCB Grants Program is to ensure the resources developed and learning gained from grant projects are broadly shared and used by WCB leadership and staff, Manitoba employers, workers and policy makers.

For more details, please refer to Appendix "A"—Knowledge Transfer and Exchange ("KTE") Plan.

3.4 Project management

3.4.1 Schedule of project milestones

Complete the table of *Key Milestone Activities* to develop a timetable and work plan that will:

- identify and describe project activities
- specify key milestones

- identify start and finish dates
- relate costs to project activities

Activities should be listed in sequence, indicating related activities and dependencies for successful completion.

3.4.2 Project Risk Assessment Matrix

Complete the Risk Assessment Matrix in the full proposal, identify the potential risks to the project's successful completion and provide potential solutions to mitigate these risks.

Examples of potential risks may include a lack of cooperation from workplace parties, resource changes or availability, etc.

3.4.3 Project budget

The project budget portion of the full proposal should contain the anticipated direct costs required to undertake the project by category (staffing and resources, materials and supplies, equipment, Knowledge Transfer and Exchange (KTE) expenses, travel and accommodation, etc.).

There should be a clear link between the project's objectives, deliverables and work plan and the budget expenditure items.

Please refer to [Appendix "B" - Project budget information](#) for more details.

4 Terms and conditions of funding

Successful applicants are required to enter into a formal funding agreement with the WCB. The agreement sets out the terms and conditions of funding, including the project's objectives, the maximum amount of the grant, the duration of the grant, expenditure controls, reporting requirements and deliverables.

4.1 Duration of grant

A project should be time-limited, generally up to a maximum of two years in duration. The WCB may consider extending the period of the funding agreement when there are extenuating circumstances.

4.2 Conditions regarding the use of funding

Grant recipients are required to hold project funding in trust and to return all project funding not required or expended upon completion of the project.

The funds awarded to each grant recipient are for use exclusively against expenditure items specified in the funding agreement. Some flexibility may be permitted for reallocation from one budget category to another within the approved budget. The movement of expenditure items within an approved budget requires prior authorization by the WCB.

4.3 Disbursements of project funds

Project payments are distributed over the term of the project, typically every four to five months, and are issued upon the WCB's satisfactory receipt of project deliverables. This includes progress and financial reports provided in a format satisfactory to the WCB.

Grant recipients are required to notify the WCB immediately of any unforeseen delays affecting the timing of the project.

4.4 Mileage and meal rates

Please also note that the WCB's mileage or meal rates will not be adjusted from the rates shown on the full proposal detail under the heading Travel, Accommodation and Meals. These rates are to be used in developing the project's budget.

4.5 Grant termination

The WCB may terminate a grant where:

- the grant recipient has failed to meet the obligations set out in the funding agreement.
- there is evidence of misuse of funds.
- the grant recipient is no longer able to complete the project to the WCB's satisfaction.

4.6 Intellectual property, ownership and use of information

All information, data, research, documents and materials developed or produced in connection with a project, including software applications (the Information) will be the exclusive property of the grant recipient. However, the WCB retains an irrevocable, perpetual and non-exclusive right to access and use the information and to copy and/or distribute the information to other parties for use without payment of any fees, charges or royalties of any type.

4.7 Liability

The WCB has no liability or duty in connection with the project other than its commitment to provide the funds pursuant to the conditions outlined in the funding agreement.

4.8 Accessibility format for final reports

The WCB, in order to comply with its obligations under *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act*, must maintain its website in accordance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). To meet the WCAG, all PDFs uploaded to the WCB's website must comply with the WCAG. Both Microsoft Word and Adobe InDesign contain tools for creating accessible PDFs. The final report will be reviewed for accessibility and must comply with the WCAG before being accepted.

Appendix "A" - Knowledge Transfer and Exchange ("KTE") plan

Definition of KTE

Knowledge Transfer and Exchange (KTE) is an integrated process within a project that engages stakeholders, decision-makers and knowledge users. KTE activities promote successful project outcomes, consider best practices, and turn research into practical solutions that can be used to prevent occupational injury, illness and disease and to foster successful rehabilitation and productive RTW of injured or ill workers.

KTE involves working with stakeholders, decision-makers and knowledge users to shape the project's process, identify priorities, clarify definitions, determine the final project methodology, interpret project results and promote project outcomes.

Each proposal should provide a description of the KTE planned for the project.

Project Advisory Committee

The WCB is giving increasing importance to engaging external audiences and stakeholders in developing research questions and identifying knowledge gaps or barriers in specific study areas. The mechanism of the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) has been used to support this approach to KTE. This has the dual benefit of creating a pool of ambassadors committed to the dissemination of results and findings, as well as having knowledgeable experts on the project team who would make sure that findings would be relevant and useful to communities of practitioners and stakeholders.

The PAC must include a WCB representative and/or SAFE Work subject matter expert, who will assist and guide the project team through key activities from project start to project completion. The project may also request the inclusion of other WCB staff members if their subject matter expertise is needed.

Developing a KTE plan

A KTE Plan will include the following key dimensions:

1. KTE goals

The KTE plan should identify the KTE goals of the proposed project.

Examples of KTE goals could include:

- creating awareness
- generating change in policy or practice
- sharing knowledge
- influencing changes in behaviour

2. KTE target audiences

The KTE plan should outline the target audiences, including potential end-users, who should hear the project's messages.

Depending on the project, target audiences could include:

- decision-makers
- stakeholders
- practitioners
- educators
- workers in specific industry sectors, occupation, age group, ethnic or language groups
- newcomers to the workforce
- the general public

The KTE plan should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the target audience(s) by identifying:

- the culture of the audience(s)
- the audience(s) readiness for change
- the leaders of the audience(s)
- potential champions for the project within the audience(s)

3. KTE stakeholder engagement

The KTE plan should identify all of the key stakeholders for the project and outline the various ways they would be engaged during the life cycle of the project.

Stakeholders may be engaged through regular meetings, written updates of project developments, seminars, etc.

It is expected that any stakeholder activities will be formalized and properly documented for the duration of the project and at completion. The timing of these activities will vary depending on the scope of the project. Different stakeholders may need to be engaged at different times during the life cycle of the project, depending on their roles.

4. KTE project messages

The KTE plan should indicate how and when the project's key messages will be developed.

These messages should align with the overall goals and final results of the project. The messages should be tailored to meet the preferences and context of the target audience(s) and could include follow-up actions which are prompted by the project's findings.

5. KTE information sharing strategies

The KTE plan should identify how information would be shared, disseminated or promoted during the project and at project completion. The application should identify the barriers and risks to KTE and how those risks would be mitigated.

6. KTE resources

The KTE plan should include a description of the resources required to undertake and implement the plan.

The total financial requirements should be shown in the budget in the Project Budget table in the full proposal.

KTE final report

The KTE final report will be submitted along with or as part of the project's final report. It should address and answer the following questions from the project.

1. What was the goal of the KTE strategy?
2. What KTE strategies were used?
3. How long did it take?
4. Who did it reach? Who didn't it reach? Is this important?
5. Was it successful and why? If not, why not?
6. Impact?

Appendix "B" - Project budget information

Project funding available

There is no maximum, but generally amounts would not exceed \$200,000. Projects are typically funded for 12 to 24 months.

Administrative costs/overhead

Project costs may include reasonable administrative costs levied by participating institutions and organizations, but should not include blanket surcharges for institutional overhead expressed as a fixed percentage of the funding requested.

Restrictions on program funding

The WCB Grants Program will not fund or support the following:

- all or a portion of an organization's operational expenses
- administrative surcharges or overhead percentage fees
- compensation for time-off or gratuities for employees
- salaries for employees not associated with the project
- profit-driven research and development projects

WCB allowable travel, accommodation and meal rates

Use the information to provide travel, accommodation and meal estimates in the Project Budget. Original receipts must accompany claims for accommodation and other travel expenses.

Mileage rates

The mileage rate set by the WCB is reviewed quarterly. For budgeting purposes, the current mileage rate can be found on the Full proposal under the heading - **Travel, accommodation and meals.**

Air travel

Take advantage of discount fares where possible. The WCB will only cover the cost of Economy Class air service.

Accommodations

- A standard hotel room is to be used on business travel. Depending on availability, choose a hotel close to the site where business will be conducted to limit the need for a rental car or car fare.
- All bills for accommodation must be signed, except if you stay with friends or relatives.
- Reimbursement made for gifts in the form of food, drink or related items will not exceed 80% of the cost that otherwise would have been incurred.
- The WCB will not reimburse the cost of an accompanying spouse or second party.

Meals

For current WCB meal rates, please refer to the rates shown on the Full proposal under the heading - **Travel, accommodation and meals.**

Project costs met by the employer or sponsor

Please specify any project costs being met by the employer or sponsor(s) of the project "in-kind" on the Project Budget in the Full proposal. The WCB encourages the applicant to obtain financial or in-kind investment from stakeholders who support the project.

Details of budget expenses

Provide details for all the amounts provided in each budget category on the Table of Budgeted Expenses in the Full proposal.

Budget category	Examples of budget details
Staff and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title and brief description of roles/responsibilities for all staffing positions • Estimated number of working hours and rate of pay for each position. • Brief description of qualifications. • Should <u>not</u> include costs of replacing staff involved in the project, buy-outs of teaching time or other responsibilities of the applicant(s) or partner(s).
Materials and supplies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of office supplies, photocopying, printing, telephone, fax, conference calls, consumables and printer supplies. • List items or supplies that exceed \$1,000.
Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase, lease or rental of tools, machinery or vehicles. • Computer hardware or software licenses and licensing fees. • Fees to access databases or research material. • Instruments for testing/experiments. • Portable data collection equipment.
Knowledge Transfer and Exchange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Advisory Committee (PAC) costs (setting up, meetings, etc.). • Costs of other stakeholder engagement. • Costs for publication (if applicable). • Costs of materials for dissemination of project resources. • Costs of travel, meals and accommodation for presentations. • Other resources to promote KTE.

Budget category	Examples of budget details
Travel, accommodation and meals	<p>Provide details of the amounts in the travel, accommodation and meals budget (if applicable), which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transportation • accommodation • meals <p><i>(Please see WCB allowable travel, accommodation & meal rates when budgeting travel, accommodation and meal budgets).</i></p>
Other expenses	<p>Provide details of the amounts in the <i>Other expenses</i> budget (if applicable), which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payment of stipends. • Payment of honoraria to participants. • Other items not referenced in the budget expenditure items above.

Ownership of capital expenditures

Upon the successful conclusion of a project, the WCB may allow the grant recipient to retain and own any equipment purchased for the project. If the project is not successfully completed, the WCB may choose to take possession of the equipment from the grant recipient.