



[Also available in French; *aussi disponible en français.*]

CWCF Technical Assistance Program

The Canadian Worker Co-op Federation (“CWCF”) offers small grants, through our accumulated reserves, to worker co-operatives to help pay for consulting services such as for marketing, financial administration, expansion, conflict resolution or legal issues. For start-ups, co-op conversions and expansions, grants can cover pre-feasibility studies (a preliminary assessment of the viability of your idea), project plans (a description of the steps required to take your idea from the conceptual stage to the concrete), by-law development, or other work required. The grants cover consulting services provided by members of the CoopZone Co-operative Developers’ Network, or by other consultants upon approval. In addition, CWCF can assist developing worker co-ops by directing you to other sources of support for business planning and organizational development.

The program has 2 components: (1) the Grant Program, and (2) the CWCF Staff Consultation Program. Worker co-ops or multi-stakeholder co-ops¹ will be able to receive assistance under the Grant Program.

Co-ops wishing to access the Grant Program must complete an application form which is attached below. For the Staff Consulting Program, no application is required. For the latter, simply contact Communications and Member Services Manager Kaye Grant, at communications@canadianworker.coop.

(1) GRANT PROGRAM

OUTLINE OF THE PROGRAM

The Canadian Worker Co-op Federation (CWCF) offers grants to assist worker co-ops which are, or agree to become, members of CWCF to hire a co-op developer or other professional to help with a challenge which the co-op is facing. Assistance can be sought in any area needed such as marketing, financial administration, governance, conflict resolution, legal issues, etc.

The grants generally cover consulting services provided by members of the CoopZone Developers’ Network or CoopZone Legal Network. If the person whom the co-op wishes to hire is not a member of the CoopZone Network, please speak to The Communications and Member Services Manager, Kaye Grant, and we will seek to make it work. Kaye’s contact information is

¹ CWCF can work with (1) worker co-ops, (2) multi-stakeholder co-ops as long as there is a class of membership for workers with substantial worker control, and (3) worker-shareholder co-ops.

provided below.

ELIGIBLE CO-OPS and EVALUATION CRITERIA

This is a benefit for members of the CWCF. In order to apply, a co-op must be a CWCF member. CWCF will evaluate the applications on the basis of whether the co-op is eligible and whether the assistance sought is judged likely to help meet the co-op's stated challenge. Given the small amount of funds available, it may not be possible to approve all applications which qualify.

Start-up Groups: A few of the grants each year may be allocated to start-up groups working towards incorporation, especially if there is not sufficient demand from the existing members. These groups are required to commit to joining the CWCF upon incorporation. Please contact Kaye Grant to determine availability.

AMOUNT AVAILABLE

We will provide up to a maximum of \$3,500 grant for current members and worker co-ops that have been operating for at least one year to hire help to carry out work as mutually agreed among the group, the co-op developer/consultant, and CWCF. For start-ups, the maximum amount would be less. For those who will work on a pre-feasibility study, (which we strongly recommend for start-ups & conversions if you have not already completed one), we can provide a list of requirements for a pre-feasibility study.

When there is more demand for grants than available, the following criteria are considered: that the value of the grant needs to be demonstrably able to make a difference to the need being addressed, and that we will seek geographic diversity in placing grants. Further, there must be a match between the co-op's need and the skills/ location of the consultant. CWCF reserves the right to provide funding only to a consultant of its choice.

(2) CWCF Staff Consultation Program

Kaye Grant, CWCF Communications Manager and a co-op developer, is available to any member co-op for telephone, Zoom or Skype consultations. Start-up co-ops are also eligible to receive these limited consultations. These consultations are similar to the Free Consulting program held at the CWCF AGMs. Member co-operatives facing any issue may contact Kaye to discuss their situation and to receive suggestions for sources of information, approaches to addressing the issue, or referrals to other co-op developers or professionals. Although these consultations are independent of the Grant Program, they may lead to a recommendation to apply to that program. No application is required; simply email Kaye to schedule a consultation (communications@canadianworker.coop).

Application Notes:

Please review this information and the application carefully as it will assist you in determining whether or not your co-op or group may be eligible to apply for assistance, and whether or not you find the basic terms and conditions acceptable. You should also review the list of Co-op Developers available on the web site of CoopZone² by following this link. (<http://www.coopzone.coop/developers/members/>). Those requiring legal help can consult the list of lawyers on the [CoopZone site](#) under the Legal Network menu tab, for Lawyers in private practice. Should you choose to submit an application, reviewing this material will also ensure that you are aware of all the information required. Providing all required information the first time will help the CWCF evaluate your request in a timely fashion.

Please identify the Co-op Developer or other consultant who will assist you, then complete the Technical Assistance Support Application and submit it to CWCF. If your group is approved for support, we will provide a grant for you to hire help to carry out work as mutually agreed among the group, the Developer/consultant and CWCF. For those who will work on a pre-feasibility study, (which we strongly recommend for start-ups & conversions if you have not already completed one), we can provide a list of requirements for a pre-feasibility study.

Note that if your co-op is chosen for assistance and is not already a CWCF member, CWCF will also ask your co-op to commit to CWCF membership for at least two years, upon incorporation as a co-op. The cost of membership is only \$50 per co-op for each of the first two years. In following years, dues are a very small percentage (0.15%) of payroll.³

Due to the amount of funds available in this program and the limited administrative resources in CWCF, the enclosed application provides the CWCF with preliminary screening of the potential projects. To pass this first stage, your group must be approved as an eligible co-op that meets the strategic priorities of CWCF. CWCF will seek to ensure that grants are allocated fairly over different regions of the country.

Applications are often reviewed on a rolling basis; however CWCF may occasionally set a deadline in any given year. CWCF's year-end is August 31st, after which a new granting pool will generally become available.

If you have any questions regarding this information or the application form, please feel free to contact Kaye Grant at communications@canadianworker.coop.

² CoopZone is a web site and a Network of Co-operative Developers, providing information on developing co-operatives of all types.

³ NOTE: Worker co-op member dues in CWCF are the equivalent of under \$1 / week for each \$33,000 in wages, and this formula has never changed since CWCF was started over 20 years ago. The thinking is that as the worker co-op movement grows, our dues base grows – and this has held true. CWCF receives no ongoing government support, so in order to offer this and other [member benefits](#), member dues are important.