



Grant Application Guide

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**Bicycle Trade Association of Canada
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Bicycle Trade Association of Canada History

The Bicycle Trade Association of Canada (BTAC) was established in 1994 to address issues affecting the retail and supplier segment of the bicycling industry in Canada.

Members of the association include suppliers and retailers in Canada's bike industry.

An eight member Board Of Directors, four from the supplier segment and four from the retail segment governs BTAC.

The following areas fund BTAC's annual budget:

- ExpoCycle Canada's bike industry trades show
- Supplier and Retail Membership fees
- Advertising sales in the ExpoCycle Show Directory
- Research Report Sales

BTAC Grant Program

Started in 2008 the BTAC Grant program has awarded 15 grants to advocacy, education and facilities groups in 6 provinces, investing \$72,000 in community bicycling projects.

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BTAC Grant Program Strategic Plan

The BTAC Board of Directors has adopted a Grants Program Strategic Plan to ensure overall alignment with BTAC's mission. Please keep the strategic plan in mind as you develop a proposal.

Mission of the Grants Program: To increase the number of people riding bikes and the frequency of rides.

Vision: A network of communities throughout Canada where people of all ages will have the accommodation and ability to bicycle for recreation and transportation.

Values:

- Bikes should be everywhere - on roads, trails and paths, on transit, and at the workplace, schools, and other destinations.
- Bicycling is the best activity and form of transportation in the world.
- There are diverse approaches we can take to generate more bicycle ridership. These include:
 - Building bicycle facilities
 - Promoting bicycle safety and education
 - Strengthening bicycle advocacy and advocacy/industry coordination
 - Working with other groups that have similar goals
 - Raising the visibility of bicycling
 - Supporting innovative and replicable ideas
 - Supporting retailers who sell and service bicycles in communities

Goals:

- Encourage ridership growth and increase bicycle industry sales
- Promote bicycling to the public
- Build political support for bicycling
- Leverage other sources of funding for bicycling
- Support bicycle advocacy groups that have the potential for significant impact on ridership growth

Action Plan:

- Accept and fund applications for three types of projects:
 - Facilities
 - Education
 - Advocacy
- Evaluate and coordinate with existing grantees
- Share success stories from funded projects through communications and promotional materials
- Re-evaluate grant guidelines annually to ensure alignment with BTAC's mission

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How to Apply for a BTAC Grant

Before you fill out an application, please be sure you have read the Grants Program Strategic Plan, and that you've carefully examined the Grant Guidelines and Selection Criteria section of our Grant Application Guide to ensure that your project proposal is eligible for funding through the BTAC Grant Program.

Application:

In an effort to green our application process, BTAC has moved to paperless applications.

APPLICATIONS ARE NOW ACCEPTED VIA E-MAIL ONLY.

The completed application consists of three main parts. Please submit the following material via e-mail in ONE pdf file, with your project title in the subject line. Your e-mail message should not exceed 10 MB. Applications completed in French MUST also submit an English copy of the complete application and support material.

1. **Cover Letter:** The letter should introduce your organization and proposal. It should appear as the first page of the pdf.
2. **Application:** this section includes the Administrative Information Form and the Grant Application Narrative. It should not exceed seven pages.
3. **Supporting Material:** This includes your financials as well as support letters from the bike industry*, a list of your board members, a project map or plan, and media articles.

Support letters from the local bike retailer and industry are KEY to your proposal. Letters from BTAC Members – retailers and suppliers – will strengthen your application. Please ask your supporters to address the letters to the BTAC Board of Directors. For a full list of BTAC Retail Members go to www.btac.org/find_a_retailer.html

Additional information is not encouraged unless it is absolutely essential to our understanding of your project. We will contact you should we need further information on which to base a decision.

We no longer accept mailed or faxed applications. All application material must be submitted together, via e-mail, as ONE pdf file – no exceptions. Incomplete or excessively long applications will not be considered.

Grant Application Schedule

BTAC reviews applications four times per year. Applications must be e-mailed by the due date to receive consideration for the ensuing decision date.

Application e-mailed by:	Committee decision by
January 1 st	March 1 st
April 1 st	June 1 st
July 1 st	September 1 st
October 1 st	December 1 st

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BTAC Grant Program Criteria

1. Applications will only be considered for initiatives that advance the BTAC Grant Program mission statement forward.
2. Grants can not be the sole source of funding on any project
3. Grant Seeking organizations **must be established prior** to any funding (start ups will not be considered)
4. Applications must have written support by a specialty bicycle retailer and other local bike industry suppliers
5. Applications must propose a specific program or project that is measurable.
6. Grants will not fund general operating or staff costs.
7. Who cannot apply? BTAC will not consider applications that request funding for events, rides, T-shirts, stickers or promotional materials.
8. Who can apply? Advocacy, Bike Lanes, Bike Paths, Bike Trails, Education, Youth Initiatives (bike safety, programs that get kids on bikes).

Grant Guidelines and Selection Criteria

BTAC accepts requests for funding of up to \$5,000 for facility, advocacy, and education projects.

All proposals must:

Address the goals of the BTAC GRANT PROGRAM Strategic Plan

- Encourage ridership growth
- Promote bicycling
- Build political support
- Leverage funding
- Support bicycle advocacy
- Address the project objectives of the facility, education, or advocacy funding categories (see below).
- Propose a specific program or project that is measurable. BTAC will not fund general operating costs.

Priority is given to:

- Bicycle organizations and associations - particularly those that have not received BTAC funding in the past.
- Projects that build capacity for bicycling by collaborating the efforts of bicycle industry and advocacy.

Note: One of the primary goals of the BTAC Grants Program is to support bicycling programs in as many places as possible. Because of our limited funds, we will rarely award grants to organizations and communities that have received BTAC funding in the past.

Review the specifics of the facility, advocacy, and education programs (listed below) to ensure that your proposal meets our guidelines.

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Facility project objectives:

“To connect existing facilities or create new opportunities; leverage federal, provincial, and private funds; influence policy; and generate economic activity.”

Eligible facility projects include:

- Bike paths, trails, routes, lanes, parking, and transit
- Mountain bike facilities
- BMX facilities
- Innovative and unique high-profile projects

Generally, BTAC will consider funding advocacy work, construction costs, and matching funds. Projects with a limited impact, such as the installation of a small number of bike racks, are unlikely to be successful.

BTAC will not fund facility applications that request funding for:

- Master plans and other policy documents
- Signs, maps, and travel
- Trailheads, information kiosks, benches, and restroom facilities
- Projects in which BTAC is the sole funder. However, BTAC will consider being the initial funder
- Bicycles and accessories
- Events

Education project objectives:

“To change behavior towards cycling, thereby encouraging the public to accept cycling as a safe, fun, healthy, efficient, and practical activity.”

Eligible education projects include:

- Cycling safety programs
- Recruiting large numbers of new riders
- Innovative pilot projects

Generally, BTAC will consider funding projects that have significant potential for changing behavior, and that have measurable success. Unique projects that combine education with political effectiveness are preferred. Programs, such as Earn-A-Bike and bicycle recycling programs that are already well established throughout the country and unlikely to add to the existing body of bicycle education knowledge or have political impact are unlikely to be funded.

Applicants interested in applying for an education grant are highly encouraged to contact BTAC before submitting an application.

BTAC will not fund education applications that request funding for:

- Helmets, bicycles, stickers, and other bicycle accessories
- Travel
- Projects in which BTAC is the sole funder. However, BTAC will consider being the initial funder.
- Events

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Advocacy project objectives:

“To build the strength of bicycle advocacy organizations that have the potential to increase bicycle ridership and build s with the bicycle industry.”

Eligible advocacy projects include:

- Initiatives that (a) will make a newer group sustainable, and (b) have tangible long- term goals
- Programs that make existing organizations significantly more effective at generating ridership
- Innovative pilot projects
- Projects that will have a significant political impact

Generally, BTAC will consider funding projects that have a reasonable degree of measurable success. BTAC will only fund advocacy projects where the applicant’s primary purpose is bicycle advocacy.

Applicants interested in applying for an advocacy grant are highly encouraged to contact BTAC before submitting an application.

BTAC will not fund advocacy project applications that request funding for:

- general operating
- Rides and sponsorship events
- Planning and retreats
- Organizations who’s primary mission is not expressly related to bicycle
- Bicycles, equipment, and accessories

Evaluation Process

Applications received by BTAC will be initially reviewed by the Executive Director to determine eligibility.

All grant proposals will receive an e-mail acknowledgement informing the applicant if the proposal is complete, eligible, and when it will be reviewed.

The Grants Committee will consider applications that are complete and eligible four times annually. The committee will recommend either approval or rejection, or request more information. If the committee:

- Approves the application, then it is sent to the full Board of Directors. The Board will vote to approve or reject the grant, and the applicant will be notified of the proposal’s outcome.
- Rejects the application, then the proposal is denied and the applicant will be notified.
- Requests more information, the Executive Director will contact the applicant to resolve outstanding issues, and then re-submit the proposal to the committee.

Grants Program Committee members are volunteers from the BTAC Board of Directors. Applicants who attempt to lobby individual members of the committee will hurt their proposal’s chance of success.

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Grant Application Narrative

Provide the following information in narrative form. Throughout the narrative, list a reference before each section. For example, put a header that says, "Purpose of the Grant – Specific Activities – Goals," when describing the proposal's specific goals.

The narrative, excluding attachments, **should not be more than 7 pages**. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Proposal Narrative

A. Organizational Information

1. Summary of your organization's mission, long-term goals, and history.
2. Description of successes in recent projects and programs.

B. Purpose of the Grant

1. Situation
 - (a) Need - Why is your proposal necessary and important right now?
 - (b) Environment - Describe the current bicycling conditions in your proposal's market area. Include descriptions of infrastructure, programs, allies, and resistance that must be overcome.
2. Specific Activities
 - (a) Goals of the project or program.
 - (b) Action Plan that will meet the project or program's goals. Be specific - include individuals or groups assigned to tasks, and due dates for achieving the goals.
 - (c) Personnel who will execute the plan and their qualifications.
3. Impact of Your Work
4. Describe the measurable outcomes of your project. Include the projected number of new cyclists. (This is very important.)

C. Evaluation

1. Explain strategies and plans for determining success.
2. Describe how other organizations can learn from your experiences - how is your project replicable?

D. Project Budget (Separate page)

1. Describe the total budget for the project, and how the funding from BTAC will be spent. Be specific.
2. Please note all other sources of funding (committed, pending, or proposed) besides BTAC.

E. Attachments

1. Financials
 - (a) Financial statements from your most recently completed fiscal year. (Municipalities need send only ONE copy of their financials.)
 - (b) Organizational budget for the present year.
2. Other Support Materials
 - (a) List of board members and their affiliations.
 - (b) Map/plan of the project and area (if applicable).
 - (c) Media articles if available.
 - (d) **Support letters from the local specialty bike retailer are required.**
Additional support letters from local suppliers are encouraged if relevant.

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Frequently Asked Questions

How does BTAC funding work? Is BTAC a foundation?

Members of the Canadian bicycle industry fund BTAC. Suppliers, distributors, dealers, and anyone who derives revenue from bicycling within Canada are eligible to become a member. BTAC members pay dues.

The grants program funding derives from the overall operating budget on an annual basis.

My proposal was rejected. Can I reapply?

If a proposal is rejected, it is unlikely that BTAC will fund the same idea in the future. However, on a limited basis, BTAC may ask an organization to revise a rejected proposal for the next grant cycle.

Additionally, BTAC will accept applications for other projects or programs from organizations that have had previous requests denied.

Capacity grants are only open to bicycle advocacy organizations. What is a bicycle advocacy organization?

Bicycle advocacy organizations must have a mission and activities directly relating to bicycling. They typically work to improve bicycling conditions and affect positive change on a local, regional, provincial, or national level.

Can I apply if I'm not a bicycle advocacy organization?

Yes. Non-profits and public agencies or departments at the local, regional, and national level may apply for facility and education grants. BTAC does not fund individuals.

What qualifies as a support letter from the local specialty bike retailer?

The letter can come from a retail business that meets BTAC's definition of a bike retailer as stated in the BTAC bylaws (derives over 50% of its revenue from bicycling in your area). The letter should mention the proposed project or program and describe how it will improve revenue for the local bicycle business.

Where should I focus my efforts in the grant application?

The most important part of the grant application is Section B – Purpose of the Grant. Applicants should describe in detail how they would reach the goals outlined in their proposal. The Grants Committee analyzes proposals for impacts on bicycle ridership and other measurable results.

How much can I apply for?

Applicants can request up to \$5,000. In very limited cases, BTAC will consider amounts over \$5,000. Requests of over \$5,000 will generally be viewed unfavorably unless the applicant has an extremely compelling case that the proposal is of unique and/or national importance.

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Frequently Asked Questions (continued)

How many grants are awarded a year?

It depends on the level of funding for each successful grant. BTAC's objective is to averages 6 grant awards per year.

If my project is approved, when will I receive the funding?

The timing of the disbursement of funds varies. It is generally between 1 and 3 months from the Board's vote to approve the grant.

How do I measure the projected number of new cyclists created by my project/program?

Use your best judgment, relying on existing census data for population and travel mode, current and future bicycling conditions, and documented examples from similar programs or projects. Whatever logic you use to determine the number, provide us with a description of how you arrived at the projection.

What is the market area for my proposal?

The geographic region where your proposal will have a measurable and significant impact. For example, if a proposed path were likely to draw a large number of visitors from surrounding towns, then those towns would be included in the market area.

BTAC awarded a grant to my organization. Can I reapply for additional funding?

Yes. BTAC will accept requests for additional funding for a previously funded project on an annual basis.

What's the difference between an "initial" funder and a "sole" funder?

BTAC as a "sole funder" means that there will be no other funding from any other source for the project or program. "Initial funder" means BTAC will be the first funder for a project, and that the applicant will secure additional revenue for the project or program in the future.

Have a question that's not explained in the guidelines or listed here?

To Contact Us:

Janet O'Connell, Executive Director

e-mail: joconnell@btac.org

Telephone: 905-535-1424 ext. 223 OR 1-866-528-BTAC (2822)

BTAC

202 Church Street, PO Box 72 Keswick, ON L4P 3E1

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Administrative Information Form

Organization Information

Legal Name of Organization		Date of Application	
Type of Proposal (e.g. facility, education, or capacity)		Name of Project or Program	
Address			
City, Province, Zip	Telephone	Fax	
Type of Corporation	Province of Incorporation, Year Incorporated		

Staff and Board Information

Contact person		Title	
Direct Phone #		Email Address	
Number of Staff: Full Time Paid	Number of Staff: Part Time Paid	Number of Staff: Volunteer	

Financial Information

Amount Requested	Total Project Budget	Total Organization Budget
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Authorization

Authorized Signature	Title
Print Name	Date