



**community food centres**  
**CANADA** good food is just the beginning

## COMMUNITY FOOD CENTRE Call for Expressions of Interest 2020

We are pleased to announce that Community Food Centres Canada (CFCC) is seeking five new organizations who are interested in developing a Community Food Centre (CFC) in their town, city, or Indigenous community.

This is an opportunity to collaborate with, and access resources from, Community Food Centres Canada (CFCC) and join a vibrant and growing community of practice among CFCs across Canada, participating in shared storytelling, training, mentorship, and evaluation in measuring impact.

CFCC is looking for potential partners who are passionate about creating “a place for food” in their community that brings people together to grow, cook, share and advocate for good food, while contributing to a national movement of community-based food programs and organizations who are working to take action on the systemic and policy issues that contribute to creating poverty, food-insecurity, isolation and diet-related disease in low-income communities.

### COMMUNITY FOOD CENTRES CANADA

Community Food Centres Canada’s **mission** is to build health, belonging and social justice in low-income communities across Canada through the power of food.

Our **vision** is a Canada where food is treated as a basic right, central to health and everyone has the means, knowledge and voice necessary to access good food with dignity.

## WHAT IS A COMMUNITY FOOD CENTRE (CFC)?

A Community Food Centre is “a place for food”. At the heart of each CFC is a dignified physical space where people feel welcome, respected and safe, where they can access good food, fun and empowering healthy food programs and the social connections that make for happier, healthier communities.

Community Food Centres work towards five strategic objectives.

1. Increase access to healthy food for low-income community members.
2. Increase skills, knowledge and action around healthy food.
3. Reduce social isolation and increase connections to a variety of supports.
4. Increase opportunities for community leadership with programs and the organization
5. Increase knowledge of poverty and food-systems issues and create new opportunities for effective action on systemic issues.

“I feel nourished whenever I come here. I get fed good food and I can talk to nice people. I’ve made new friends here and I feel like I’m part of a community every time I step inside.”

Community member, CFC

CFCs provide people with access to high-quality food in a welcoming and respectful environment. CFCs offer multidimensional programming that is locally relevant, but has representation from three key programmatic areas of healthy food access, food skills and civic engagement.

Community members coming to a CFC may come in the door to get a healthy, delicious meal or buy some fresh produce at an affordable market, then perhaps choose to sign their kids up for an after school food program or get involved in a cooking or gardening program. In lower-income communities, CFCs offer a gathering place where people can find friends, connection to a variety of supports, and a voice on the issues that matter to them.

“I can be myself here, you walk into the centre and it just feels like hope. It’s this little bubble of sunshine. And being part of that, I can also see the world in a better light.”

Community member, CFC

## WHAT WILL BE PROVIDED

CFCC is looking for five organizations who will, based on their readiness, receive funding within one of two streams.

1. **Ready to Launch:** \$75,000 will be provided annually for a three year term for organizations who have the infrastructure, value alignment, programming and capacity in place to launch as a Community Food Centre within the first year of a funding relationship with CFCC.
2. **Partner in Development:** \$75,000 will be provided for a one-year development phase. These funds can be used for a variety of purposes to enable partners to develop in areas that may be needed to achieve a level of readiness to launch as a CFC. These activities will be established between CFCC and the successful applicants according to a mutual assessment of what is required to reach this stage.

For partners that are successful in reaching these requirements for a partnership at the end of the first year, there will be an opportunity to renew for a longer term at a base level of \$75,000 of funding for an additional two years, with the intention of launching as a full Community Food Centre.

There is no set target of organizations that CFCC is seeking for either stream - all successful applicants could be Ready to Launch or become a Partner in Development, or there may be a mixture of readiness.

All selected organizations will also access support from CFCC, which may include program planning, evaluation, communications, fundraising, and/or knowledge exchange. They will also be connected to a network of affiliated CFCs and community food organizations working toward similar programmatic and policy goals.

## WHO SHOULD APPLY

We anticipate there will be a variety of types of organizations with varying levels of capacity that will apply, hence the two streams explained above. There is also no one kind of organization we work with.

You might be a larger organization, such as a Community Health Centre or social service agency, or a Band Council that currently operates some food programs but wants to consolidate them under an arm of the organization and pull together programs in one unified space. Or you might be a smaller food-focused organization operating in a small-to-mid sized community that

wants to grow and sees value in and the potential to gain additional support from being connected to a national movement.

CFCC's review process will use a range of criteria to assess which organizations have the best fit with the CFCC mandate and the greatest chance of success in achieving the mission and sustainability. For more information on the partnership criteria see pages 6-7.

Overall, successful applicants will have demonstrated:

- alignment with The Good Food Principles (see Appendix A) and efforts towards progressive and dignified approaches to addressing food insecurity
- commitment to the Community Food Centre Model, the CFC's strategic objectives (see above), and the three program areas (food access, food skills and engagement)

In both streams it is important to note that while the core funding provided through this partnership may provide a boost or start the applicant organization will already have to have other significant elements in place to make a CFC viable:

- be a Registered Canadian Charity or qualified organization listed with the Canada Revenue Agency
- a physical space where the CFC can be located and identified as such (one building or location which contains a kitchen, dining area, program space, office, access to a garden)
- existing food programs
- a vision and desire to do the work
- funds (or a combination of in-kind and funds) to reach the ~\$400,000 minimum annual budget we believe is required to run a solid set of programs at a CFC.
- capacity to fundraise locally and participate in CFCC's national fundraising initiatives

*Note: If not all aspects are fully in place at the onset, the key is that the organization can see a pathway toward securing them, and that they bring assets, ambition, enthusiasm and a desire to be a part of a national movement.*

Please review the appendices attached which provide greater detail around the relationship a CFC will have with CFCC, to ensure your organization has the capacity to meet (or work towards) these expectations.

## PROCESS & TIMELINES

Please read the guide and the supporting documents included in this package in their entirety before submitting an application. We strongly encourage all interested organizations to contact CFCC to discuss their proposal prior to submitting.

### STEP ONE: Submit an Expression of Interest

To be considered for the 2020 Community Food Centre partner selection process, eligible organizations must first **submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) by Friday January 17, 2020.**

**Prior to submitting, please ensure that you have read the Partner Selection Guidelines and Appendix below.**

To give you an idea of the scope of what we are looking for, the total length of this letter should fall between 2-4 pages. Feel free to use point form or tables where it seems more concise and effective.

#### **Your Expression of Interest should include:**

- A brief organizational profile including:
  - the history of your organization, location, and the services you currently provide
  - a description of the community your organization is based in and the populations your organization has historically supported. Please also speak specifically to the level and types of needs of your community.
  - an outline of your organization's existing experience related to community programs addressing food health and poverty. In particular food access (e.g., community meals, food banks), food skills (e.g., community kitchens, cooking groups gardens, nutrition education), and engagement (e.g., advocacy campaigns, peer advocacy, public education) programming
  - Your organization's alignment with CFCC's **Good Food Principles (see Appendix A) and CFC Strategic Objectives (see page 1).**
  - whether you are a Registered Canadian Charity or qualified organization listed with the Canada Revenue Agency

- What is your capacity to take this on? Do you have a physical space where a Food Centre could be located, for example? Does your organization have resources and staff that would be available in-kind, as well as any experience with fundraising?
- An overview of your organization's interest in applying to become a CFC. Please explain your views around the value of this partnership with CFCC, including what you see as the benefits to your organization and community
- Who will be the person leading the development of a Community Food Centre at your organization? If different, who will directly manage the Community Food Centre once up and running (programmatically and operationally)?
- Who is supporting this proposal within your organization (i.e. senior management, board of directors) and beyond (funders, community leaders, other organizations)

If available, please attach the following in addition to your Expression of Interest:

- Overview or list of your current programs (a program calendar would suffice)
- Latest strategic plans
- Organizational chart
- Most recent Financial Statements
- Most recent Annual Report

All questions and Expressions of Interest should be submitted to:

**Shannon McCauley**

Senior Manager, Partnership Development

[shannon@cfccanada.ca](mailto:shannon@cfccanada.ca)

416-531-8826 ext. 263

## STEP TWO: Submit an Application & Supplemental Documents

Please note that only those organizations who have been shortlisted will be required to complete a more thorough application. This template will be provided by CFCC upon notification of being shortlisted, however will directly reflect what is included the Partner Selection Guide attached to this document.

## DUE DATES

Please see below for a list of important dates:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>
Expression of Interest Due	Friday January 17, 2020
Applicants notified if they have been shortlisted, and provided with the full application template	Monday February 3, 2020
Site visits with shortlisted applicants	January - March 2020
Final Applications Due	Friday February 28, 2020
Final Decisions	Friday March 27, 2020

# COMMUNITY FOOD CENTRE BACKGROUNDER

Before submitting an Expression of Interest please review this Community Food Centre (CFC) Backgrounder. Those that may have read it previously should review it again as some things may have changed. The backgrounder describes the basic parameters of the CFC model and relationship with CFCC, as well as touches on the operating standards that must be upheld by each CFC.

It is important to be clear on these elements, as it will help you assess whether or not this kind of partnership is right for your organization.

If you have any questions, please reach out to:

**Shannon McCauley**  
Senior Manager, Partnership Development  
[shannon@cfccanada.ca](mailto:shannon@cfccanada.ca)  
416-531-8826 ext. 263

## PARTNERSHIP CRITERIA

The table below provides a high-level overview of the partnership criteria that will be reviewed from those who proceed to the **application phase**. However, this is a helpful tool to review prior to submitting a Letter of Interest, as well, to assess your organizational readiness for the Community Food Centre model.

Each of these criteria will be elaborated on under the Basic Specifications further below.

<b>PARTNERSHIP CRITERIA</b>
ORGANIZATION - The organization has charitable status and a Board of Directors that is supportive of the application (if not applicable, you have proper governance and oversight mechanisms)
POPULATION & GEOGRAPHY - The organization is located in a town or city with a population of 50,000+ within Canada.  <b>Though this is our general guideline, an exception may be made for First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities or communities where there is a large Indigenous population. Please reach out to CFCC to discuss.</b>



<p><b>WORK IN LOW-INCOME COMMUNITIES</b> - The organization has a track record of serving a low-income community and has trusted relationships with this community</p>
<p><b>DEMONSTRATED NEED</b> - The organization can demonstrate community need</p>
<p><b>COMMUNITY SUPPORT</b> - The organization demonstrates that there is interest in this initiative and no significant opposition to it</p>
<p><b>PHYSICAL SPECIFICATIONS</b> - The organization has or can secure the physical space required for programs, including a commercial kitchen (10-15 people), dining space (80-100 people), offices, and a garden (onsite or close to site)</p>
<p><b>SHARED VISION</b> - The organization shares the Community Food Centre vision, strategic objectives, and Good Food Principles (see the appendices in the 2017 Partner Selection Guidelines and CFC backgrounder)</p>
<p><b>PROGRAM AREAS</b> - The organization is committed to offering programs in the areas of healthy food access, food skills, and education/engagement</p>
<p><b>DISTINCT IDENTITY &amp; BRAND</b> - The organization is willing to name and brand the place and programs as a Community Food Centre</p>
<p><b>LEADERSHIP</b> - The organization has senior leadership who can provide oversight to the CFC</p>
<p><b>IN-KIND SUPPORT</b> - The organization will assign in-kind support to the project proportionate to their size (e.g. program staff, bookkeeping, space, equipment)</p>
<p><b>EVALUATION</b> - The organization is committed to implementing evaluation tools and contributing statistics to a shared evaluation framework</p>
<p><b>OPERATING STANDARDS</b> - The organization is prepared to be assessed annually against the Operating Standards for CFCs and will use the results to set goals for their organization</p>

FUNDRAISING - The organization has or is willing to work to develop the capacity to raise funds for the CFC in order to properly resource it so that it meets the above operating standards

COLLABORATION WITH CFCC - The organization is prepared to work collaboratively with CFCC around programming mix, fundraising strategies, evaluation, and communications.

HARMONIZING THE CFC WITHIN THE ORGANIZATION - The organization is willing to embrace the CFC as a key initiative of their organization, including making any necessary adjustments to the larger organization to ensure the CFC fits in - and does not compete - with other programs

## BASIC SPECIFICATIONS

There are many models of community food programs that exist, and our partners adapt their programming to their local needs and communities, however each community food centres have certain common elements that they share. We are looking for those that have as many of these elements as possible, or have them within view, and the application is based around speaking to them. The following is a summary of the basic specifications and operating standards.

## PHYSICAL SPACE

A Community Food Centre is “a place for food”. At the heart of each CFC is a dignified physical space where people feel welcome, respected and safe, and where they can access good food, fun and empowering healthy food programs and the social connections that make for happier, healthier communities. Offering programs in an integrated space allows for synergies and cross-pollination to happen between programs. Thus it is important that the organization have or be able to secure, in a relatively short time frame, the minimum physical space requirements to deliver programs:

- Public-health approved commercial grade kitchen (accommodates 10-15+ people)
- Dining/meeting space (accommodates 80-100+ people)
- Offices for staff
- Gardens on site, or close to the site
- Outdoor bake oven or greenhouse are an enhancement, but not necessary

It should also be bright, well-kept, outfitted to be warm and welcoming, and set-up for sociability. The space also needs to have a permanent presence. This is the space that will be dedicated to, and named as the Community Food Centre.

If you do not already have such a space, the closer you are to securing one, the stronger your application will be (showing a plan for costs, construction and resource development, as well). From time to time we are able to consider requests for capital investments for renovations via a separate process.

Please note that while Community Food Centres sometimes incorporate emergency food programs, such as food banks, it is important that CFCs not be defined spatially or culture-wise by this approach. CFCs try to work to overcome the stigma that can often come with more traditional charitable approaches and attempt to shift the organization to a place that prioritizes the dignity and involvement of participants and works through a social justice lens.

To read more about the importance of providing beautiful, welcoming physical space read: [How to build healthy, connected communities? Start with dignified spaces.](#)

## PROGRAM AREAS

The program priorities differ from community to community and are informed by local needs, service gaps and demographics; however, the CFC model relies on the interplay between programs in three areas:

**Food Access Programs** provide access to healthy food to those in need in a respectful and dignified manner. ex.: community meals, affordable produce markets, healthy food bank

**Food Skills Programs** work to promote empowering healthy food knowledge and skills, primarily in the areas of gardening and cooking. ex.: community gardens, community kitchens, after-school programs, perinatal nutrition programs

**Education and Engagement Programs** work to give individuals and community's voice and agency on food security and poverty issues. ex.: from formalized programs (e.g. peer advocacy, community action groups) to more of an events- or campaign-based approach (e.g. public education workshops and events, large-scale policy campaigns)

Organizations will be committed to offering programs in all three areas and they should meet as many of the CFC strategic objectives as possible (see Appendix B). Ideally programming is offered by dedicated CFC staff, though there is some flexibility to meet the standard through in-kind contributions (e.g. staff from the larger host organization) or via partnerships.

To learn more about CFC program and their outcomes please [click here](#).

## STAFF

In order to offer service and accountability, CFCs need to be adequately staffed and staff need to perform at a level of competence to ensure impact, respect and efficiency. Minimally, 3 FTEs need to be assigned to offering programs in the three program areas listed above. Ideally,

depending on the size of the community, CFCs are working toward a staffing level closer to 5 (or more in larger cities).

## EVALUATION

CFCs have great potential to move the dial on a number of outcome areas, such as healthy eating, social and civic engagement. Evaluation is fundamental to each CFC and its respective programs. We strive to develop a culture of learning, reflection and adaptation, and do this through strong systems of measuring impact that are present at each CFC.

CFCs will be asked to track key program outputs and conduct program and agency-level surveys. CFCC can provide evaluation support, including providing logic models and program-level evaluation tools that can be adapted, setting-up and training staff on output tracking systems, and administering the agency-wide annual survey.

## FUNDRAISING & COMMUNICATION

Fundraising and communications programs will vary significantly depending on the existing capacity of the partner organization and the resource needs of the CFC. However, it is important that all CFCs have plans and resources in place to ensure that there is a minimum and sustainable level of financial support to support the programming that takes place under the CFC umbrella, and that communications efforts supports local and national fundraising efforts and are compatible with our shared messaging.

### *Fundraising*

Our funding alone will not be enough to fulfill the CFC operating budget, which can range from \$300,000-600,000+ annually depending on the size of your organization and what existing capacity you have. Each partner organization will need to have a plan to provide the remaining budget. Minimally, a plan for how the CFC will be resourced over 3-5 years that outlines the in-kind and/or dedicated resources needed to execute the plan will be required in the early stages of the partnership. From time to time partner organizations work collaboratively with the CFCC fundraising team in an effort to take a coordinated approach to donors (e.g. in the case where a national donor might want to donate locally).

### *Communications*

A distinct identity will need to be developed for each CFC, including a name, wordmark (with the words “Community Food Centre”) and a logo. In some cases, mostly with larger organizations, they will adopt the CFC as an arm of their larger organization. In this case the CFC is recognized as “a project of” the larger host organization. In other cases, mostly with smaller organizations with a community food program mandate, the organization adopts the CFC name as the name for their entire organization. Both options are available.

CFCC works with the partner organization to develop and promote the CFC brand, including promoting the CFC's work through a variety of mechanisms that are created at various times throughout the partnership, including a page on the CFCC website that describes the CFC; stories from the field that are included in CFCC's monthly e-newsletter and social media; national press opportunities; and national materials – such as brochures, reports and videos on the CFC movement.

It is also important that the partner promotes the CFC brand through an online presence (e.g. website/webpage for the project, social media accounts), local media coverage, and by collaborating with CFCC and partner CFCs on shared engagement and education campaigns and activities.

## RELATIONSHIP & FUNDING

Our intention is to work toward a long-term partnership with a core base funding commitment of \$75,000 annually, which may be supplemented with additional or special funding, as available (e.g. corporate partnerships, donor directed funds or project-specific grants)

On top of bringing annual funding, there are a variety of resources and forms of support that CFCC can provide in the areas of program planning, evaluation, communications, fundraising, and knowledge exchange. The desire and need for support will vary from organization to organization and as such it will be offered on an as-needed basis. The partner organization can also expect some financial reporting and regular check-ins.

All partners will be required to meet the minimum operating standards. These operating standards are intended to protect all CFCs to ensure that there is adherence to the model, values and brand. They are designed, however, to offer some flexibility for different levels of capacity and size, with minimums and "optimal" standards defined for each area. Annually each partner organization will work with CFC to review operations against standards. The operating standards are a combination of both quantitative and qualitative measures in areas such as program mix, staff and volunteers, physical space, food quality, community responsiveness, community leadership, and fundraising and communications. The operating standards have largely been summarized in this document. If you wish to see a copy of the Operating Standards please email or call a Program Manager.

The partner organization will be connected to a community of practice of other CFCs and Good Food Organizations. There will be several opportunities to connect and to share best practices, including at the annual Food Summit, through listservs and online shared learning sessions.

# APPENDIX A

## GOOD FOOD PRINCIPLES

### **Principle 1: Taking action from the individual to the systemic: Food access, food skills and civic engagement**

The poverty and food issues that we see manifested in low-income communities have causes and solutions that are multifaceted and complex, and thus there is power in approaching the problem from the individual level to the systemic level. We believe that all people have the right to the basics of a dignified life: a decent income, housing and employment. Together we need to fight for these rights, and create opportunities for those affected to make their voices heard. Until we achieve these goals, we can work to help meet basic need in the short term and to maximize the choices available to them with skills that enable them to choose, grow and prepare good food. Offering programs that span the range of access, skills and engagement on food and hunger creates relevance and multiple points of connections, while creating the potential for a critical mass of staff and programs.

### **Principle 2: Believing and investing in the power of good food**

We believe good food has the power to build health, connect people and inspire people to become engaged in issues that matter to them. We strive to make good food a priority, and to provide food through our programs that is delicious, healthy, sustainably-produced and pleasurable to eat.

### **Principle 3: Creating an environment of respect and community leadership**

We believe that respect -- for the inherent value, assets and potential to contribute of all people -- should underpin all of our work. Thus we strive to avoid the signs, symbols and procedures that contribute to the stigma often experienced by people attending food programs in charitable organizations, and to positively communicate our respect for all participants through respectful procedures and inviting community involvement. We believe that people are healthiest and happiest when they are making their own choices, meeting their own needs and contributing to their communities. We strive to empower those with lived experience of hunger and poverty with a platform to speak up against these issues and help others in the community who are struggling with them too. In addition, inviting community involvement breaks down the binary between the 'givers' and 'receivers' of charity so dominant in many emergency food programs.

#### **Principle 4: Meeting people where they're at**

We work to meet people where they are at by recognizing and striving to meet needs of participants at multiple levels in ways that are relevant to their actual circumstances. By recognizing that people's skills and goals are diverse, that many bring their own assets to the table, in all areas we work with people toward self-identified change, without judging or preaching. We work to ensure that there is as much pleasure and value in the process of reaching individual and community goals as there is in reaching the outcome sought.

#### **Principle 5: Aiming high for our organizations and our community**

We believe that in order to do the important work of community food organizations, these organizations need to be properly resourced. Volunteers are an important part of our work but cannot sustain the entire sector -- private philanthropy and government must also play a role in supporting organizations that are properly staffed and funded to be able to create impact. In return, we believe in demonstrating our value by holding ourselves to a high standard of performance and impact.