

Ministry of Infrastructure

Improving Connectivity for Ontario (ICON) Program

August 2020

Ontario 

Agenda

- ICON Program Overview
- Mapping Tool
- QAs (questions submitted through Webex)

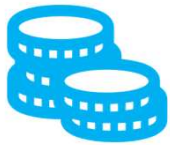
Program Launch and Overview

- The Ministry of Infrastructure has launched the Improving Connectivity for Ontario (ICON) Program and the first intake is now underway.



Program Objective

- Increase broadband and cellular access for households and businesses in areas of need.



Provincial Allocation

- The Province will invest \$150 Million over four years starting in 2020/21. Program will be cost leveraged with private and other public funding (federal and/or municipal). Up to 25% of eligible project costs.



Application

- The program will include a two-stage application process; project appraisal and technical assessment.



Partnerships

- Encourages creative collaboration between communities and private sector to increase connectivity and meet unique local needs.

Two Intakes

1. Intake 1: projects that are nearly ready to proceed. Partnerships in place; initial project planning already underway; local support in place.
2. Intake 2: projects that require more time to establish partnerships, undertake studies / planning, and acquire local support.

ACTIVITY	INTAKE 1	INTAKE 2
Deadline for Stage 1 applications	August 21, 2020	Early winter 2020-21
Stage 1 assessments complete; invite to Stage 2	September 25, 2020	Late winter 2020-21
Deadline for Stage 2 application for initial review	November 28, 2020	Late summer 2021
Deadline to complete Stage 2 clarifications	January 15, 2021	Mid-fall 2021
Stage 2 assessments complete; applicants notified and funding offers issued	April 2, 2021	Early spring 2022

Eligibility

Applicant Types

- Non-profits and for-profit entities incorporated in Canada,
- Municipal entities, and
- Band Councils.

Connectivity Types

- Broadband (minimum speeds of 50Mbps down and 10Mbps up, or 50/10)
 - Last-mile: connecting community to Point of Presence (POP)
 - Backbone: network connection to transport data between POPs
 - Satellite: upgrades to broadband service in satellite-dependent communities
- Cellular (LTE minimum service level)
- Customer-premises equipment is not eligible.

Stage 1 Evaluation Criteria

CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION	VERIFICATION
Located in area of need	Serving areas where there are customers without 50/10 or LTE service. Application must show the project area.	Shapefile or other mapping format; image of project area.
Minimum experience in connectivity infrastructure	At least one Project Partner has 3 years experience building, owning, servicing, and/or operating connectivity infrastructure in Canada.	Complete Section H of application.
Technology meets speed / capacity targets	Minimum 50/10 broadband connectivity with no monthly data usage caps. Minimum LTE service for cellular projects.	Complete Section of application.
Funding request does not exceed 25% of total eligible costs	Total provincial funding per project is limited to 25% of eligible costs. If the application asks for more, it will be deemed ineligible.	Complete Section E and the Estimated Budget template.
Local support for improved connectivity	Must provide evidence of local support from the affected municipal entities, Band Councils, or administrative organizations in unrecognized areas.	Letter, council resolution, other formal communication.

Other funding sources

Maximum Ontario contribution

- ICON funding is intended only to address capital cost barriers preventing private service providers from expanding to underserved areas.
- If projects have already been awarded provincial funding they will not be considered under ICON.
- If other provincial funding sources are being pursued, ICON will only provide up to 25% of total eligible costs.

Federal funding

- Applications that require more support can apply for other funding. The Ministry may provide conditional offers of funding if your application is awaiting other sources of funding.
- The Universal Broadband Fund is expected to launch soon. The Ministry continues working with Canada on program alignment.

Other funding sources

- There is no minimum contribution by applicants. However, Stage 2 evaluation will ensure that ICON is only addressing capital barriers.

Design Informed by Municipal Feedback

- Through a Broadband Working Group with AMO, MOI incorporated the following design features:

Provide a longer intake period that allows flexibility for municipalities of varying experience levels

01

Flexible Intake Period



Available across Ontario where there is need. Any TSP can apply if it has 3+ years relevant experience / incorporated in Canada.

Confirmed Local Support



02

Accessible by all TSPs



04

Updated Mapping



Only consider projects with confirmed local support (e.g. council resolutions, or letters of support)

03

Provide more granular mapping data and allow for supplementary mapping information.

Ontario 

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