



MEC Avalanche Safety Grant

Background

Avalanche Canada seeks to inspire, engage, and empower recreationists to enjoy Canada's winter backcountry safely by developing, coordinating, promoting, and delivering world-class public avalanche safety programs and services in Canada. Avalanche Canada recognizes that there are many people in marginalized communities who may not have access to avalanche training. These communities may be Indigenous, Black, people of colour (IBPOC) or other communities (e.g. LGBTQIAS2+, neuro-diverse, or other marginalized groups) who may face disproportionate barriers in accessing winter backcountry pursuits in Canada. Avalanche Canada and MEC have partnered to reduce some of these barriers by offering Avalanche Skills Training (AST) grants to organizations serving marginalized communities.

The MEC Avalanche Safety Grant aims to increase accessibility to safe winter backcountry adventures for non-profit organizations serving marginalized communities by providing funds to cover the costs of AST 1 courses.

The financial support provides operational costs of up to \$2,500 for up to four AST 1 courses in either British Columbia or Alberta (covering eight participants per course). These courses will be scheduled to take place between November 29, 2024, and April 15, 2025. Additional grant details are outlined below:

Avalanche Canada will:

- Fund for AST instructor wages and travel costs.
- Assist with vetting AST providers if necessary.
- Provide printed resources for eight participants.
- Provide avalanche safety equipment (transceiver, shovel, probe) for use during the course.
- Fund classroom venue and AV costs if not covered under instructor fees.

our organization will be responsible for:

- Administration of the course, including:
 - Scheduling course dates.
 - Hiring and communication with a licensed AST Provider*.
 - Vetting of the appropriate students for this course (eight skiers/snowboarders OR eight snowshoers OR eight snowmobilers—groups should not be mixed discipline)
 - Assigning a point person for all communication regarding the course (e.g., instructor to students and Avalanche Canada to your organization)

- The Avalanche Canada Tool Box (which includes the necessary avalanche safety equipment for eight students) throughout the course, including receiving the shipment and arranging its shipment to the next location.
- Submitting a final report to Avalanche Canada after the course.
- Securing a classroom space necessary for one day. Coordinate with the AST instructor to ensure there is a meeting space that will accommodate nine people (eight participants and one instructor) with a screen (or white wall) and an LCD projector.
- Maintaining the timeline. The AST 1 course must be delivered between November 29, 2024, and April 15, 2025.
- Exercising discretion regarding participant gear. Students require skis/skins/poles (or snowshoes if a snowshoe course), appropriate clothing, a backpack, personal protective equipment, and personal items for the field day. Your organization can decide whether to use some of the grant funds to assist with equipment rentals for students.
- Ensuring the funds received are used for the following:
 - Instructor wages.
 - Classroom rental (if not included in instructor fees).
 - Equipment rental (skis, skins, boots, snowshoes) for students.

***Note:** Avalanche Canada can assist with vetting AST providers.

About the Avalanche Skills Training (AST) 1 course

If you venture out of bounds, off the trails, or into the backcountry, an AST 1 is the starting point. You don't require any prior experience to enroll in this course; it is essential for anyone recreating in the backcountry.

During this course, you will learn how to recognize avalanche terrain and essential skills for companion rescue. The AST 1 course is a minimum of two days, incorporating both classroom and field components. It is crucial to start your avalanche education with this course, and the same applies to your friends because having just one person trained in a group is not enough. Everyone in your group should complete an AST 1. It's important to note that an AST 1 course is only the beginning of your avalanche safety journey, as professionals will tell you—avalanche education is a lifelong process.

What you will learn:

- Avalanche formation and release.
- How to identify avalanche terrain.
- The basics of trip planning.
- Optimal use of tools and resources like the avalanche forecasts to mitigate your avalanche risk.
- How to use appropriate travel techniques in avalanche terrain.
- Intro to companion rescue.

Organization Eligibility

We provide the MEC Avalanche Safety Grant to organizations that meet the following criteria:

- Organizations dedicated to facilitating and amplifying diversity in the outdoors and are led by or inclusive of people from marginalized communities.
- Based in and serving marginalized communities in British Columbia and/or Alberta.
- Eligible organizations include non-profit, charities, and community groups. (While being registered as a non-profit preferred, it is not mandatory.)
- Organizations that support programs aimed at removing barriers for marginalized communities to engage in outdoor pursuits are encouraged to apply.

We do not fund AST grants for:

- Sports teams
- Political organizations
- Commercial or incorporated enterprises
- Professional organizations or trade groups

Key dates:

Applications open from **September 30, 2024, to November 1, 2024**

Final decisions will be made **by November 8, 2024**

AST courses to be run between **November 29, 2024, and April 15, 2025**

Final report due **April 30, 2025**

Grant Application

Applicant Organization:

Qualified Donee Type:

BN/Registration Number/Society number (if available):

Legal Name:

Operating Name (if different from legal name):

Mailing Address:

Phone:

Website:

Twitter:

Facebook:

Instagram:

LinkedIn:

Organization Profile:

Project Contact

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Executive Director or senior staff person

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

1. What is your organization's mission and goal(s)?

2. Please share how your organization is committed to working on creating equitable access to outdoor experiences for IBPOC/racialized/marginalized community members

3. What services do you provide?

4. What populations do you serve?

5. What percentage of your membership are from marginalized communities? (e.g. IBPOC, LGBTQIAS2+, neuro-diverse, physically diverse, etc.)?

6. How many active members are in your organization? (“Active” meaning they are involved in your organization’s mission and goals.)

7. Do you collect membership dues?

- Yes
- No

8. Are you a not-for-profit organization?

- Yes
- No

9. Are you a registered charity?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please provide your registration number: _____

10. Check any of the following that apply. Are you:

- A political organization
- Religious-based
- Membership is limited
- Board is volunteer based

11. What percentage of your members recreate in the winter backcountry? _____%

12. Do your members have access to avalanche training?

- Yes
- No

13. Do you have at minimum 8 members who would be interested in this opportunity? (Note: 8 skiers OR 8 snowshoers OR snowmobilers, cannot be mixed).

- Yes
- No

14. Do you have a classroom space available?

- Yes
- No

15. Do you have access to an LCD projector?

- Yes
- No

Please see sample budget template below. Submit your budget with application:

- Please show both revenue and expenses, description, amount, etc. Revenue must equal expenses.
- Revenue or in-kind: e.g. donations from other sources to assist the course as in rentals or lift passes.
- Expense type examples are administration, wages, travel, small equipment, advertising/promotion, office supplies, etc. Please include a description for each type of expense.

Sample Project Budget

Revenue		Unconfirmed Revenue	Confirmed Y/N
	AvCan Avalanche Safety Grant	\$ 2500.00	N
	(List other sources of funds)		
Total Revenue			
Expense Type	Description	Expense Amount	Grant Funds Applied
Administration	5% of total projected expenses		
Wages	AST Instructor Wages		
Total Expenses			

If you have questions please contact: Nancy Geismar, ngeismar@avalanche.ca

Send the completed application and budget template to: Nancy Geismar, ngeismar@avalanche.ca

Ways to support:

We welcome support from those who would like to contribute to this grant to enable more IBPOC/racialized/marginalized folks to safely learn about and access the winter backcountry. If you would like to contribute, please contact: Nancy Geismar, ngeismar@avalanche.ca.

Our supporters:

MEC is the title sponsor for this grant and Backcountry Access (BCA) has contributed significantly by providing two Tool Boxes (each with eight sets of avalanche transceivers, shovels and probes). We thank these organizations for their support of this important initiative.

