

# Open Call for Scaling Hubs

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# CALLING FOR SUPPORT TO SCALE TRANSFORMATIVE HOUSING INNOVATIONS

CMHC’s Housing Supply Challenge Round 5: Level-Up (“Level-Up”) seeks to increase the adoption of solutions that transform Canada’s ability to deliver more community and market housing, faster. In addition to funding innovative solutions to increase housing supply, Level-Up aims to recognize and address barriers that limit the adoption and scaling of selected solutions.

To amplify and sustain the impact and objectives of Level-Up, CMHC is running a separate application process for “Scaling Hubs.” CMHC is seeking applications from for-profit and not-for-profit organizations interested in, and capable of, scaling solutions to increase impact.

The Scaling Hubs will run in parallel to the Level-Up Challenge and will provide a range of non-financial supports to the Semi-Finalists and Finalists (“Innovators”) of Level-Up. The Hubs are intended to be a consortium of talent that offer custom support in-person and remotely across Canada where Innovators are located. They will enable all Level-Up Innovators to have access to entrepreneurial mentorship, management advice, peer support and accountability, and networking opportunities. The Hubs’ intervention will provide non-financial incentives that have lasting positive effects long after the Challenge is over.

CMHC will select up to five organizations to perform the roles outlined in further sections, who will hereby be referred to as the Scaling Hubs (the “Hubs”) for the duration of the Level-Up Challenge.

**This Open Call is specifically for organizations interested in becoming part of the Scaling Hubs. If you are an Innovator with a solution to increase housing productivity, consider applying to the Level-Up Challenge. More information and the Applicant Guide for Innovators can be found on the [Impact Canada website](#).**

## Objectives & Roles

The Scaling Hubs will run in parallel to the Level-Up Challenge, working with Level-Up Innovators and CMHC to meet the following objectives:

- Mobilize Innovators and establish cross-sector “solver” communities that enhance Canada’s housing innovation ecosystem;
- Accelerate established solutions’ growth potential and help Innovators achieve greater adoption goals; and
- Create network conditions to scale, amplify, and sustain the impact of solutions.

**Role of the Scaling Hubs:** Provide **custom scaling support** as required to accelerate Innovators’ progress within the Level-Up Challenge.

**Role of Level-Up Innovators (Semi-Finalists or Finalists):** Provide **solutions** in need of greater adoption to increase Canada’s ability at a system-level to produce more housing, faster.

**Role of CMHC (Innovation and Partnership team):** Provides **financial contributions** to support the application of the Hubs’ scaling expertise directly to Housing Supply Challenge Innovators, and **non-financial contributions** such as value-add direction and insights from a housing context

(or Challenge context) that support the Hubs' role to help Innovators achieve the desired Level-Up outcomes. CMHC will strengthen the Scaling Hubs (where applicable) by incorporating their housing expertise, national perspective and connections, an understanding of financing and financial systems, and a network of research and data specialists committed to housing affordability.

## ELIGIBILITY

The Applicant (the legal entity that submits an application to this call) must:

- Be a **legal entity validly existing in Canada** capable of entering into binding agreements in Canada.
- Submit an application that is within the scope, roles, and objectives outlined in this document.
- Be in good standing with CMHC. Applicants in breach of contract with CMHC may be denied funding on that basis.
- Not be in receipt of any other funding from CMHC for a purpose similar or substantially similar to the purpose of the Scaling Hubs. Please note that stacking is permitted, but duplication is not.
- Not be an applicant to the Housing Supply Challenge Level-Up Round as an Innovator (Community Housing Innovator or All Housing Innovator streams).
- Not be connected with the evaluation of the applications for the Housing Supply Challenge Level-Up Round, or an employee of CMHC.

**Partnerships and consortia** are encouraged to apply. Any arrangements between the Applicant and its partners are strictly the responsibility of the Applicant. Non-Canadian individuals and entities may be part of a partnership or consortium submitting an application but cannot be the Applicant.

CMHC will verify the eligibility of each Applicant and application based on the above criteria. Eligible applications will then proceed to evaluation.

## SCOPE

At a high level, the scope of the Scaling Hubs is to accelerate established solutions and help Innovators achieve growth goals that would not otherwise be possible.

Together with CMHC, the Hubs will apply their networks, infrastructure, programming, and business acumen to support the uptake of Level-Up housing solutions that will lead to quicker development, reduced costs, and permanent improvements in Canada's housing delivery process.

This work includes:

- Helping Innovators develop scaling plans, prioritize activities, and work creatively to maximize their impact throughout the Challenge
- Connecting Innovators with a broad network of technical and executive mentors who can effectively coach on personal, product, business, and market development
- Coordinating regular in-person and digital events where Innovators and others in the housing ecosystem can share, learn, coach, and connect
- Providing opportunities and training for solutions to attract investment, financial or non-financial, where advantageous to scaling
- Drawing in creative talent to help Innovators achieve mass adoption and system-change.

## Timing, Deliverables, and Funding

The Level-Up Challenge runs from November 2023 until March 2025. The Scaling Hubs will begin work in January 2024 and proceed in three phases as outlined in Table 1. CMHC has allocated a maximum of \$5 million in total contributions for this callout of the Scaling Hubs. Funding will be disbursed between up to five participating Scaling Hubs organizations as indicated in Table 1.

Deliverables will be further developed and defined once the Level-Up Foundational Solutions have been selected and onboarded. Final deliverables will be outlined in contribution agreements with the successful Scaling Hubs applicants and may differ from the expected deliverables outlined in Table 1.

This call for applications will result in funding agreements for a period of up to 15 months (January 2024-March 2025). Additional calls may be issued, as required, over the course of the Round.

Table 1: Timing, Deliverables, and Funding

Phase	Activities and Expected Deliverables	Funding Allocation
<p><b>Phase 1</b>  <b>Onboarding &amp; Solution Growth Plans</b>  <i>January – March 2024</i></p>	<p>Attend orientation and intake sessions with CMHC and Level-Up Innovators.</p> <p>Coordinate with other Hubs to develop a personalized solution growth plan for all Innovators, including coaching and programming to support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Personal development and goal setting</li> <li>- Product or service development</li> <li>- Business development and management</li> <li>- Market development and communications</li> </ul> <p>Work with other Hubs to match Innovators with appropriate mentors.</p> <p>Work with other Hubs to identify regional connections and facilities to ensure all Innovators can access in-person supports as needed in Phases 2 &amp; 3.</p> <p>Work with other Hubs to set up peer-support and communications systems for Innovators.</p>	<p>Up to \$1,250,000 is available for activities and deliverables set to occur between January - March 2024.</p> <p>Funding will be allocated based on the qualifications and scope of each Hub organization as outlined in a contribution agreement.</p>
<p><b>Phase 2</b>  <b>Personalized Support</b>  <i>March – September 2024</i></p>	<p>Engage Innovators in the personalized solution growth plans that have been prepared for them.</p> <p>Provide practice opportunities and coaching for Innovators to pitch and showcase their solutions to live audiences of clients, partners, or investors.</p> <p>Meet with Innovators regularly to track progress and offer support where needed and maintain clear communication with the rest of the Hubs and CMHC.</p> <p>Host or coordinate regular events that build awareness of solutions and support the adoption and uptake of innovations.</p> <p>Help Innovators respond to user feedback and gather evidence that would support their advancement through the Level-Up Challenge.</p>	<p>Up to \$2,000,000 is available for activities and deliverables set to occur between April – Sept 2024.</p> <p>Funding will be allocated based on the performance of the Hubs against assessment and the scope of each Hub organization as outlined in a contribution agreement.</p>
<p><b>Phase 3</b>  <b>Accelerating Growth &amp; Showcasing Solutions</b>  <i>October 2024 – March 2025</i></p>	<p>Meet with Innovators regularly to track progress and offer support where needed and maintain clear communication with the rest of the Hubs and CMHC.</p> <p>Host or coordinate regular events that build awareness of solutions and support the adoption and uptake of innovations.</p> <p>Provide showcase opportunities and knowledge sharing activities to Innovators in service of their scaling.</p> <p>Work with other Hubs to produce video summaries of each Next Level Solution.</p> <p>Develop sustainability and off-ramping plans with Innovators to ensure that mentorship and peer-support is available after the Level-Up Challenge.</p>	<p>Up to \$1,750,000 is available for activities and deliverables set to occur between October 2024 – March 2025.</p> <p>Funding will be allocated based on the performance of the Hubs against assessment and the scope of each Hub organization as outlined in a contribution agreement.</p>

## Eligible Expenses

The following expenditures are eligible for reimbursement by CMHC:

- All costs considered by CMHC to be direct and necessary for the successful implementation of the Scaling Hubs as described in a budget and payment schedule approved by CMHC;
- Costs associated with the overhead and administration of the delivery of the Scaling Hubs by a funding recipient; and
- Costs incurred during a period defined within the contribution agreement.

Note: The maximum level of total government funding to be provided under the Scaling Hubs program will not exceed 100% of eligible expenditures.

*Note that CMHC funding cannot be used as private equity by Scaling Hubs members.*

## ACTIVITIES

In the Level-Up Challenge, Innovators must prove that they have **achieved buy-in and adoption** of their housing solutions from implementers (housing providers) and they have a **strategy to scale**. They are **expected to execute** on that scaling strategy during the Challenge to achieve game-changing impact for the housing sector.

Scaling Hubs are expected to apply their own creativity, networks, and business acumen to help all Innovators see what is possible for their growth and give them the highest probability of success.

Eligible activities are all those considered by CMHC to be direct and necessary for the successful implementation of the Scaling Hubs as described in a budget and payment schedule approved by CMHC. These activities will reflect the Objectives of the Scaling Hubs and may include (non-exhaustive):

**Advisory Services:** Activities that share expertise and provide guidance to Innovators, organizations and/or implementation partners within the context of the Level-Up Challenge and on relevant topics (e.g. business scaling, procurement, public engagement, outcomes-based project planning, etc.). Includes expert mentorship and technical advisors.

**Active Matchmaking:** Activities that actively facilitate productive connections between stakeholders and Innovators (e.g. through establishing, maintaining and expanding a database of stakeholders in the Level-Up Challenge domain, through convening events or opportunities for connections, etc.).

**Knowledge-Sharing:** Activities that create or source content on Level-Up Challenge solutions and approaches, as well as best practices and lessons learned, and disseminate it through open and accessible events, roundtables, webinars, conferences, workshops, and public engagement.

**Strategy Execution:** Activities that create scaling plans, growth targets, and coaching to execute.

**Accessing Established Networks:** Activities that access targeted and highly subscribed channels of communication to provide tools to Innovators.

**Building Awareness:** Activities that build awareness of solutions and stimulate increased buy-in.

**Convening Events:** Activities that enable Innovators to present their solutions to target audiences.

Networking, active matchmaking and knowledge-sharing activities could include conferences, colloquia, workshops, webinars, information packages, explainer videos, web content or other media, roundtables, consultations, training, and engagement with multi-sector stakeholders.

## PROCESS

### Submitting an Application

Eligible Applicants are invited to send an application by email to [hsc-dol@cmhc-schl.gc.ca](mailto:hsc-dol@cmhc-schl.gc.ca) by the application deadline on **January 8<sup>th</sup> at 20:59 PDT/ 23:59 EST**.

This Open Call and application is for selection into Phase 1. Successful Scaling Hubs Applicants will receive application and evaluation details to continue into subsequent phases after selected.

Please ensure that you use the following template.

**Application Template – Please submit as Letter Size PDF via email:**

**Page 1: Applicant Details**

Applicants may submit an application as a single entity or as a consortium. In either case, all named parties on an Application must submit the following information:

- Full legal name of the organization.
- Name and position of the primary contact for the organization
- Mailing address, telephone number, email address for all correspondence.
- Description of each organization’s mandate, operating model, and background, including information about relevant achievements or recognition.

*If applying as a consortium, please identify the consortium’s lead contact and specify their contact details.*

**Page 2: Executive Summary**

- An overview of who you are, your qualifications, and why you would be a great Scaling Hubs candidate (up to 500 words).

**Pages 3-7 (max): Qualifications and Pitch**

- Please respond directly to the assessment criteria in Table 2 and provide evidence of the quality of your: mentor network, impact, programming, facilities and supports, credibility, and business acumen.
- This section can be up to five pages in length, and you are encouraged to use both text and visuals as appropriate.

**Include in the body of your email: References or Portfolio (links and descriptions)**

Applicants are encouraged to provide up to 5 links with text descriptions to validate and their portfolio, programming, facilities, or events referenced in their PDF application. These links may include videos up to 10 minutes in length.

Applicants may also be asked to provide any additional information that CMHC deems necessary to assess the eligibility of the application and to undertake risk assessment and due diligence.

Terms and conditions will be negotiated and provided in a contribution agreement to successful applicants.

## Deadline for Submission of Applications

Please follow the template provided and submit your PDF application by email to [hsc-dol@cmhc-schl.gc.ca](mailto:hsc-dol@cmhc-schl.gc.ca).

Applicants are encouraged to contact the Level-Up team at [hsc-dol@cmhc-schl.gc.ca](mailto:hsc-dol@cmhc-schl.gc.ca) with questions about eligibility and other application requirements by January 2, 2024 at 20:59 PDT/ 23:59 EST. Please use "Scaling Hubs Application Submission" as your subject line and include your reference or portfolio links in the body of the email with descriptions.

The deadline for receipt of applications is **January 8th, 2024 at 20:59 PDT/ 23:59 EST**.

## Assessment of Applications

Scaling Hubs Applicants will be evaluated by CMHC based on the following criteria. Their applications must provide sufficient information to assess their performance on these criteria.

**Table 2: Assessment Criteria**

Assessment Criteria	Description	Max Points
<b>Depth and Quality of Mentor Network</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Degree to which the Applicant presents an active mentorship network with strong retention rates.</li> <li>- Degree to which the Applicant’s mentorship network can supply cross-sector and international experience.</li> <li>- Degree to which the Applicant’s mentor network comprises proven talent, technical expertise, and executive-level responsibility.</li> <li>- Degree to which the Applicant has the infrastructure to develop and deliver mentorship opportunities suitable to Level-Up Innovators.</li> </ul>	<b>20/100</b>
<b>Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Degree to which the Applicant has proven they can help businesses, social enterprises, non-profits, or individuals grow their impact.</li> <li>- Degree to which the Applicant has made a positive economic, social, or environmental impact on Canada.</li> <li>- Degree to which the Applicant has developed effective practices and processes for measuring impact.</li> </ul>	<b>15/100</b>
<b>Programming</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Degree to which Applicant has proven they can deliver programming that would serve the Objectives of the Scaling Hubs:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobilize Innovators and establish cross-sector “solver” communities that enhance Canada’s housing innovation ecosystem</li> <li>• Accelerate established solutions’ growth potential and help Innovators achieve greater adoption goals</li> <li>• Create network conditions to scale, amplify, and sustain the impact of solutions</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Degree to which the Applicant presents a competitive advantage or unique offering.</li> </ul>	<b>20/100</b>



Table 2: Assessment Criteria (continued)

Assessment Criteria	Description	Max Points
<b>Facilities and Supports</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Degree to which the Applicant has a track record of hosting well-managed and impactful events.</li> <li>- Degree to which the Applicant can provide in-kind services, resources, and incentives for Innovators to participate more fulsomely in the Scaling Hubs.</li> <li>- Degree to which the Applicant has shown they can organize both in-person and digital convening opportunities and cultivate peer-support among Innovators.</li> </ul>	<b>15/100</b>
<b>Credibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Degree to which the Applicant is trusted by public sector partners or funders.</li> <li>- Degree to which the Applicant is trusted by private sector investors or partners.</li> <li>- Degree to which the Applicant is valued by its alumni, mentor, client, or membership network.</li> </ul>	<b>15/100</b>
<b>Business Acumen</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Degree to which the Applicant has been able to spot potential and provide interventions that accelerate success.</li> <li>- Degree to which the Applicant has been able to identify liabilities and provide interventions that mitigate risk or failure.</li> <li>- Degree to which the Applicant shows a history of learning from experience and adapting accordingly.</li> </ul>	<b>15/100</b>

In addition to the assessment criteria in Table 2, CMHC will be selecting Scaling Hubs to ensure that Hubs support will be offered:

- In English and French;
- In the geographies of Level-Up Innovators; and
- Relevant to for-profit, non-profit, and social enterprise Innovators.

All Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application assessment.

Applicants are responsible for submitting applications containing accurate and reliable information based on professional knowledge. Inaccurate and/or false information may result in the application being disqualified from the assessment process.

Successful Applicants will be responsible for delivering the required activities in accordance with a signed contribution agreement between the Applicant organization and CMHC.

# CONTACT INFORMATION

Applicants are encouraged to contact CMHC for any questions regarding the process.

[hsc-dol@cmhc-schl.gc.ca](mailto:hsc-dol@cmhc-schl.gc.ca)

For more information on Level-Up, visit the Impact Canada Level-Up Challenge page.

<https://impact.canada.ca/en/challenges/level-up-challenge>

For more information about CMHC and its other programs, visit the CMHC website

[www.cmhc.ca](http://www.cmhc.ca)