LIVING CLASSROOM

Living Classroom Fund Personal Support Worker (PSW) Application Guide

Wave 5

RIA Schlegel-UW Research Institute for Aging
Enhancing Life

cesba

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Living Classroom Fund PSW Application Guide

The Schlegel-UW Research Institute for Aging (RIA) and the Ontario Association of Adult and Continuing Education School Board Administrators (CESBA) are pleased to invite applications for funding to support collaboration between long-term care homes and Personal Support Worker (PSW) training providers to expand and sustain the Living Classroom model across Ontario. Funding will be available from January 1, 2027, through March 31, 2029.

The Living Classroom Fund has specific eligibility requirements. Please read the following Application Guide carefully before completing your funding application.

NOTE: All sections of the Application Form must be completed, as well as the Integration Activity Plan. All required attachments must be received by the deadline. Applicants selected for the final stage of funding consideration will be contacted for an interview. Late applications will **not** be accepted.

Application Timelines for PSW Funding Applicants

Cohort	Application Window Opens (10:00 a.m. ET)	Application Deadline (by 4:30 p.m. ET)	Application Status Notification	Letter of Agreement & EFT Submission Deadline
Winter or Spring 2027	September 21, 2026	November 2, 2026	December 7, 2026	December 18, 2026
Fall 2027	September 21, 2026	March 29, 2027	May 11, 2027	May 25, 2027

Confidentiality Notice

Information collected through the Living Classroom Fund application form will be used to assess the merits of your funding request. As part of the assessment process, the information may be shared with review committee members, external consultants, staff members at the RIA or CESBA, and/or Government of Ontario officials.

It may also be used and/or disclosed for policy analysis, research, and/or evaluation purposes. To conduct these activities, various sources of information under the RIA's and/or CESBA's custody and control may be linked.

If the application contains personal information, it will be administered in accordance with the provisions governing protection of personal information set out in the Privacy Act.

What is a Living Classroom?

The Living Classroom is a partnership model that integrates education into a long-term care (LTC) home to support the development of the health care workforce for senior living. Students, faculty, and those living, visiting, and working in the home engage in a culture of shared learning. For a detailed description of the Living Classroom model, see https://livingclassroom.ca/, Building Your Living Classroom Team and the Readiness Checklist - LTC Partner and the Readiness Checklist - Education Partner. For the benefits of the Living Classroom, see The Benefits of a Living Classroom.

The Living Classroom Fund supports educational institutions and LTC homes looking to enhance PSW and PN training through hands-on learning.

Questions?

For more information about the Living Classroom Fund or to request support, please visit https://livingclassroom.ca/ or email livingclassroom@the-ria.ca.

Application Guidelines

APPLICATION TYPE

In this section:

- Select if you and your partner are applying to develop a new PSW Living Classroom or to enhance, expand, and/or sustain an existing PSW Living Classroom.
- **If your partnership is applying for an existing PSW Living Classroom, you may skip Parts 1, 2, and 5, unless there are new or updated details to add to these sections.**

What is a "new" or "existing" Living Classroom?

An **existing** Living Classroom refers to a LTC and education partnership with an active classroom location that has produced PSW graduates at any time within the past two years. **Existing** Living Classrooms also refer to programs funded in previous waves.

A **new** Living Classroom is a location that has never hosted a Living Classroom, has not received funding in previous waves, OR a location that previously hosted a Living Classroom but has not produced any PSW graduates within the past two years.

EXISTING APPLICANTS

- If your partnership is applying for an existing PSW Living Classroom, please provide the name of the organization, the primary contact name, and the primary contact email address for both the Lead and Partner organizations.
- If your partnership includes multiple long-term care sites (such as in a distributed or rotating model), please list organization names and contact information for each site, rather than completing a separate application for each site. Separate applications can be completed for unrelated sites. Please email livingclassroom@the-ria.ca if you have any questions.
- If you are a new applicant, please skip this section.

PART 1: LEAD APPLICANT DETAILS

In this section:

- Start by selecting your organization type.
- Enter your organization name.
- Enter your organization's address.
- Enter the address of the Living Classroom location if it differs from the lead organization's address.
- Enter your name, job title and contact details.
- Briefly describe your role with respect to planning and/or managing the Living Classroom.
- Provide contact details for any alternate/secondary contacts for your Living Classroom program.

Who can apply for funding?

The Living Classroom Fund supports a partnership model between educational institutions and LTC homes looking to enhance PSW training through hands-on learning. Applicants must submit a **joint** application, with input from both the **LTC home partner** and **education institution partner**. Either partner may serve as the **lead applicant** or as the **partner organization**.

Applications will be accepted from any of the following organizations in Ontario, as long as **both** a LTC partner and an education partner are represented:

- LTC home
- LTC corporate office
- Publicly-assisted college
- Career college

- Indigenous institute
- Indigenous Education Authority
- District school board

ELIGIBILITY NOTES:

- **This funding opportunity is available to Living Classroom partners who can commit to launching a new Living Classroom PSW cohort in Winter, Spring, and/or Fall 2027.**

- Please refer to the specific PN application form and the accompanying application guide for detailed requirements related to the Practical Nursing program funding if applying to a PN Living Classroom.

- Career colleges must provide current proof of necessary approvals to integrate their PSW program into the Living Classroom Model. These approvals include:

    - Ministry of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security (MCURES) site inspection approval. (Career colleges should contact their assigned inspector to obtain this).

    - National Association for Career Colleges (if offering a NACC PSW program).

  Proof of approval, such as a letter or email, should be sent to livingclassroom@the-ria.ca at the time of application. **If proof of approval is not available at the time of application, it must be provided before November 12th (Winter/Spring 2027 applications) or April 15th (Fall 2027 applications).**

- School boards and the Indigenous Education Authority must meet the Personal Support Worker Quality Assurance requirements set out by the Ontario Association of Adult and Continuing Education School Board Administrators (CESBA) as defined in the Quality Assurance Process Handbook. New school board programs or programs that have not undergone the Quality Assurance process will be required to work with CESBA to complete the process to maintain funding.

- Educational institutions are responsible for ensuring their student insurance covers the location of the Living Classroom.

Who should complete the application form?

The application form should be completed jointly by the primary LTC home partner and the primary education institution partner. Either partner may serve as the **lead applicant** or as the **partner organization**.

The **lead applicant** is the organization that will receive and manage funding for the Living Classroom, including disbursing funds to the **partner organization(s)** as agreed between the

lead applicant and the partner organization(s). The lead applicant is accountable for reporting on how the funds are spent in consultation with their partner organization. **Both** the lead applicant and partner organization are responsible for completing the funding application and any required program reporting and evaluation activities.

Can partner organizations apply for funding separately?

No. Organizations must apply **jointly** for Living Classroom funding. Living Classroom partners are encouraged to consider formal agreements to determine how funds will be disseminated from the lead applicant to the partner organization(s) as applicable.

What if we don't have a Living Classroom partner?

Applications will only be accepted from organizations with partnerships to support the establishment of robust and sustainable Living Classroom programs. The program will actively support successful applicants who are developing new partnerships.

Can a national LTC corporate office apply for funding?

Yes. National LTC organizations with a corporate office in Ontario can apply for Living Classroom funding. However, all funds must be used solely to support Ontario Living Classrooms.

What is the definition of a Living Classroom "location"?

A Living Classroom location is the individual LTC home where students participate in integrated learning, which may include theory and/or lab components. The Living Classroom may be located within, or adjacent to, the LTC home.

Can an organization apply for multiple Living Classroom locations?

Yes. Organizations with more than one Living Classroom partnership or location may submit multiple applications.

Can an application include multiple long-term care homes?

Yes. A Living Classroom partnership can include more than one long-term care home. Student cohorts may be distributed or rotated among long-term care Living Classroom sites to support localized community needs, student recruitment, long-term care staffing/preceptor capacity, and program sustainability.

The lead applicant may complete a single application with multiple LTC partners. They will receive and manage funding for the Living Classroom, including disbursing funds to the partner organization(s) as agreed upon between the lead applicant and the partner organization(s). Partners will be responsible for reporting and evaluation requirements for each Living Classroom site.

Separate applications for unique sites/unrelated partnerships can still be submitted.

What education programs can be supported through this funding?

This funding opportunity is available for Living Classrooms that offer a **PSW certificate program.**

The Living Classroom Fund is designed to increase the number of PSWs and PNs who graduate from Living Classrooms and choose to work in LTC. While we recognize that some Living Classrooms may also offer other education programs needed to meet LTC workforce demands, this funding is currently available only for PSW and PN education within Living Classrooms.

PART 2: LIVING CLASSROOM PARTNER

In this section:

- Start by selecting your organization type.
- Provide the name and address of the partner organization.
- Provide the name, job title, and contact details of the partner organization's contact person.
- Briefly describe the contact person's role with respect to the Living Classroom.
- Provide contact details for any alternate/secondary contacts.
- Indicate whether an MOU, operating agreement and/or lease agreement has been signed.
- Indicate whether your Living Classroom partnership includes additional long-term care sites (e.g., a distributed or rotating model). If yes, please describe the model your partnership will use, followed by the LTC name(s), address(es), and contact information.
- Tell us about any other organizations involved in your Living Classroom partnership.

Must the partners have an MOU, an operating agreement, or a lease agreement in place?

No. A signed agreement(s) is not required to submit a funding application. However, formal agreements are highly recommended to guide and sustain successful Living Classroom partnerships. For more information, see the Memorandum of Understanding resource.

PART 3: PROGRAM AND COHORT DETAILS

In this section:

- Select the length of your Living Classroom PSW program.

- Indicate which Living Classroom PSW Cohorts you are applying for funding for. Select all that apply.
- Select the delivery format of your Living Classroom PSW program. If "other", please describe the delivery format.
- List the expected start and end date of the new Living Classroom PSW student cohort your program will launch in **Winter, Spring, and/or Fall 2027.**
- Indicate your program's seat capacity and your target enrolment number.
- Indicate whether Living Classroom PSW students will be OSAP eligible.
- Select the cultural designation of your education institution, if applicable.
- Select the cultural designation of your long-term care home, if applicable.
- Select the language(s) the PSW program will be offered in.

Can partners apply for a Winter, Spring and/or Fall 2027 cohort within a single application?

Partners may apply for multiple cohorts within a single application if already planned (i.e., you can include the Winter, Spring, and/or Fall 2027 cohorts on a single application) as long as you meet the deadline for the most imminent cohort.

PART 4: FUNDING REQUEST

In this section:

4A. Funding Stream 1: Implementation Funding

- Indicate whether you are applying for implementation funding.
- Select the expense categories for which you anticipate spending approved funding.

4B. Funding Stream 2: Student Wraparound Supports

- Indicate if you are applying for Student Wraparound Support.
- Select the expense categories for which you anticipate spending approved funding.

How much funding is available?

Two funding streams are available: **Implementation** funding and **Student Wraparound Support** funding. Applicants may apply for one or both funding streams. If your application is approved, payments will be made quarterly following confirmation of cohort launch(s). Details will be included in a payment schedule outlined in the Letter of Agreement.

Applicants must report spending based on eligible expense categories in mid-year and year-end financial reports.

Implementation Funding supports the integration of the Living Classroom PSW program into LTC homes. Funding can be used to cover expenses related to starting, enhancing, expanding, or sustaining your Living Classroom.

- **New** PSW Living Classroom partners will be allocated:
    - $50,000 in preliminary funding
    - $40,000 per cohort listed in PART 3: COHORT DETAILS
- **Existing** PSW Living Classroom partners will be **allocated $40,000 per cohort** listed in PART 3: COHORT DETAILS.

Student Wraparound Support funding aims to reduce barriers to students' participation in or completion of the PSW program. **$15,000 will be allocated per cohort** listed in PART 3: COHORT DETAILS.

What can the funding be used for?

Stream 1: Implementation Funding

Implementation funding supports expenses that contribute directly to starting, enhancing, expanding, or sustaining your Living Classroom.

General guidelines:

- All services and goods for the project must be procured in accordance with the Broader Public Sector Procurement Directive.
- Consideration should be given to expenses that will enhance program sustainability beyond the funding end date.

Implementation funding expenses may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Renovations (physical space improvements related to the Living Classroom, including accessibility upgrades)
- Equipment and supplies (e.g., mannequins, beds, education materials, etc.)
- Technology to support learning in the Living Classroom (e.g., improved Internet access, computers, etc.)
- Staffing costs* for operations of the Living Classroom (e.g., instructors; Living Classroom Lead to support scheduling, staff, resident and family engagement, and integrated learning; time dedicated to meetings, evaluation and reporting, etc.)
- Marketing and recruitment (e.g., graphic design, printing, advertising costs, open houses, etc.)

*Are long-term care staffing costs, such as preceptor or student placement coordinator costs, eligible?

No, LTC homes are encouraged to use PREP LTC funding for these staffing costs. Costs associated with Living Classroom coordination (e.g., integration activities) may be eligible. Please detail in your application.

Stream 2: Student Wraparound Supports

The purpose of wraparound support funding is to support students with expenses that may otherwise prevent them from participating in or succeeding in an education program. Applicants will be responsible for either a) distributing funding to students directly, or b) spending funding on services or materials that will reduce student barriers to participating in and completing the PSW program.

General guidelines:

- Wraparound supports depend on the needs of the local community and students.
- Consideration should be given to supports that will enhance program sustainability beyond the funding end date.
- Wraparound supports may not duplicate funding allocated to implementation categories in this or previous funding waves.
- Applicants cannot use these funds to duplicate wraparound support already funded by other government sources. This excludes the retention support funding currently available to district school board programs.
- All services and goods for the project must be procured in accordance with the Broader Public Sector Procurement Directive.

Wraparound supports may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Transportation
    - Purchasing or renting a bus to take students to the Living Classroom site
    - Funds to cover taxis/Ubers, gas cards, etc.
    - Partnerships with local transportation agencies to offer low-cost passes
- Housing support
    - Student rent assistance
    - Partnerships with local housing services
- Academic or course-related costs to reduce students' out-of-pocket expenses
    - Uniforms
    - Textbooks
    - Required medical tests, criminal record checks, etc.
    - Technology for students
    - Academic guidance, counselling, or tutoring, including language support classes

- Food/meal support
    - Meal grant or voucher programs
    - Campus food pantry
- Child care support
- Emergency assistance fund/on a needs basis
    - Small stipends or grants to support students with financial emergencies that may impact their ability to complete the program, such as a vehicle repair or caregiving/medical costs
- Support with health or medical-related costs
- Mental health supports
    - In-person or virtual mental health supports, including partnerships with local services
    - Student peer groups, including those that address cultural needs and belonging
    - EDI initiatives to reduce barriers to inclusion and success for diverse students
- Cultural activities
    - Cultural programming, events, learning resources, etc.

Can the funding be used to pay for PSW tuition costs?

No. Tuition costs are not eligible for either funding stream. Other Ontario programs may be available to support tuition costs for PSW students.

Does the funding need to be spent by a specific deadline?

Living Classroom funding is allocated per cohort. All funding must be spent by March 31, 2029.

Can the funding be applied to previous expenses?

No. Funding can only be applied to expenses incurred after the signing date of your Letter of Agreement.

Are in-kind contributions required?

No. In-kind contributions are not required to be eligible for funding, but are welcome and encouraged.

PART 5: LIVING CLASSROOM DETAILS

In this section:

- Indicate whether the long-term care site will also host a Practical Nursing Living Classroom with the same or another education partner.

- Describe the location of your Living Classroom and select the available spaces (e.g., classroom, lab rooms, student lounge/study areas, faculty spaces, etc.).
    - For new Living Classrooms, describe your future vision for the classroom.
    - For existing Living Classrooms, tell us about any planned changes.
- Select the locations where the theory and lab components of your program are delivered.
- Describe how student learning is, or will be, integrated into the LTC home (outside of clinical placement). The Integration Activity Plan must be completed along with the application and will be discussed as part of the interview.
- Indicate whether the LTC home can accommodate all Living Classroom students on site for integrated learning activities, labs, and for clinical placement. If not, please describe your plan for accommodating students' integrated learning activities, labs, and clinical placements.
- Indicate whether the Living Classroom long-term care site will accommodate all Living Classroom students for the final consolidation placement. If not, please describe how your program will endeavour to place students in a long-term care setting for final consolidation.
- Indicate your agreement to meet regularly with a member of the Living Classroom Outreach team throughout the funding period to develop a comprehensive Sustainability Plan.

PART 6: LONG-TERM CARE HOME REDEVELOPMENT

In this section:

- Let us know whether your LTC home has been approved for redevelopment and/or new beds.
    - If yes, describe the number of new beds, current development status, anticipated opening date, how the Living Classroom is included in the development, etc.
    - Indicate how many new PSWs you will need to hire as a result.

PART 7: AGREEMENT

In this section:

- Indicate your agreement with the application process and funding requirements. The lead applicant and partner organization(s) must indicate their agreement.

What is the application process?

Applications open on September 21, 2026. See application timelines for deadlines and status notification dates.

Submissions, including the completed application form and Integration Activity Plan, must be emailed to livingclassroom@the-ria.ca. Late applications will not be accepted.

FOR CAREER COLLEGES ONLY: Attach proof of MCURES site inspection approval and National Association for Career Colleges (if offering a NACC PSW program) approval to integrate the PSW program into the Living Classroom model. For MCURES site inspection approval, career colleges should contact their assigned inspector by email. **If proof of approval is not available at the time of application, it must be provided before November 12th (Winter/Spring 2027 applications) or April 15th (Fall 2027 applications).**

Need Support? Please let us know if you experience any technical issues or have accessibility requirements that require support to complete your application.

Important Dates and Deadlines

Cohort	Application Window Opens (10:00 a.m. ET)	Application Deadline (by 4:30 p.m. ET)	Application Status Notification	Letter of Agreement & EFT Submission Deadline
Winter or Spring 2027	September 21, 2026	November 2, 2026	December 7, 2026	December 18, 2026
Fall 2027	September 21, 2026	March 29, 2027 at	May 11, 2027	May 25, 2027

Applying for Multiple Cohorts

Partners may apply for multiple cohorts within a single application if already planned (i.e., you can include the Winter, Spring, and/or Fall 2027 cohorts on a single application) as long as you meet the deadline for the most imminent cohort.

If you apply for a single cohort, you can later apply for a subsequent cohort.

Next Steps and Required Documentation

1. **Interviews:** Applicants selected to advance to the final stage of consideration will be contacted by a member of the Living Classroom Outreach team to schedule an interview

shortly after their respective application deadline. Please review the interview questions provided below to prepare.

2. **Funding Requirements:** If successful, you will be required to submit the following documents by the respective dates listed in the table above to secure funding:
    - A **Letter of Agreement (LOA)** signed by the lead applicant and partner organization(s).
    - If new: a completed **Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)** form to enable direct deposit to the lead organization's bank account.

What are the reporting and evaluation requirements?

The Ministry of Long-Term Care requires regular updates on the use of the funds it provides to Living Classrooms. Therefore, detailed reporting and evaluation requirements and dates will be included in the Letter of Agreement and may include the following elements:

- A **baseline evaluation survey** to be completed at the start of the funding period.
- A **mid-year narrative and financial report**, and a **mid-year evaluation survey** describing your progress and how the funding has been spent over the previous six months within the eligible expense categories.
- A **year-end narrative and financial report**, and a **year-end evaluation survey** describing your progress and how the funding has been spent over the previous six months.
- **Bi-monthly meetings** with a Living Classroom Outreach team member.
- Support with distributing student surveys.

The above requirements are mandatory reportables for the Ministry of Long-Term Care.

Research on the Living Classroom model will be conducted, but participation is voluntary and not required.

Can the RIA and CESBA provide coaching support for our Living Classroom?

Yes. Free coaching support is available on request. Please contact us at livingclassroom@the-ria.ca for more information.

Can the RIA and CESBA help us with our funding application?

Yes. Please contact us at livingclassroom@the-ria.ca for more information.

What questions should I prepare for the interview portion of the application?

The following are areas of discussion and questions to help you prepare for the interview. Please note that your interview will be tailored by the Living Classroom Outreach Team member

specifically for your unique Living Classroom partnership. **These areas and questions are provided as a guide and are not exclusive.**

Partnership Details

Describe the nature of your Living Classroom partnership, detailing its history, current engagement frequency, types of activities, and the planned division of roles and responsibilities between partners for running the program.

- This should include a summary of conversations regarding shared Living Classroom costs (such as staffing and ownership of shared assets) and the progress toward formalizing agreements.
- Additionally, specify if any other collaborating organizations (e.g., other LTC homes, community partners) are involved and describe their specific role in the delivery model.

Cohort Details

Confirm the information provided in the application, including whether you are launching a new or existing Living Classroom program and the details of your expected cohorts.

- This includes specifying the planned start and end dates, and the expected cohort size.
- Additionally, describe your organization's ability to support the required evaluation processes, particularly the distribution of student baseline surveys.

Funding Request

Come prepared to describe in detail how you intend to use the Living Classroom funding for each expense category within the funding stream(s) requested (Implementation and Student Wraparound Supports).

Living Classroom Details

Describe your current or planned Living Classroom program delivery model, providing specific details on how the theory, clinical, and lab elements are structured and integrated.

- Be prepared to discuss the submitted Integration Activity Plan.
- If the LTC home cannot accommodate all students for clinical placement, describe which additional homes will partner to support these placements and the plan for onboarding the partner(s) to the Living Classroom concept.

Sustainability and Continuous Quality Improvement

Come prepared to begin discussing the sustainability of your Living Classroom. Areas of discussion could include, but are not limited to:

- Living Classroom orientation processes for students, educators, and staff
- Training for preceptors, staff, and students
- Renewal and review processes
- Financial planning

The Living Classroom program is funded by the Government of Ontario and led by the Schlegel-UW Research Institute for Aging (RIA), in partnership with the Ontario Association of Adult and Continuing Education School Board Administrators (CESBA).

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