

Community Partnership Evaluation Scheme

About the Scheme

The Community Partnership Evaluation Scheme (CPES) pilot supports community-led, charitable, and not-for-profit initiatives to evaluate the mental health and wellbeing outcomes of green exercise or nature-based activities. The CPES pilot has been developed by the Institute for Green Exercise Research (IGER) and is **offered free of charge** to eligible initiatives.

The pilot will focus on Ottawa-based initiatives that offer green exercise (any type of physical activity undertaken outdoors in nature or green spaces) or nature-based activities (facilitated or structured activities that involve engagement with the natural environment) and aim to support the mental health and/or wellbeing of participants.

The pilot has two aims:

1. To find out how green exercise and nature-based activities can improve adults' mental health and wellbeing;
2. To see how easy and useful the CPES pilot is for various green exercise and nature-based programs.

The CPES pilot will gather data on several participant outcomes. These include wellbeing, social connection, loneliness, and connection with nature. We're glad to talk about adding other outcomes that could help participating initiatives.

The tools used to measure participant outcomes will be standardized, validated self-report questionnaires that are commonly used in research. This will help ensure findings are reliable and allow comparisons across different types of groups and activities.

The evaluation will be delivered electronically and in English during the pilot phase. Participants of the chosen initiatives will complete a short online questionnaire at the start and end of the evaluation period. The duration of the evaluation period will be agreed with individual initiatives. IGER will send the evaluation report electronically within one month after the second participant questionnaire closes.

As the evaluation concerns mental health and wellbeing, initiatives are asked to consider whether participation is suitable for the people who attend their activities. Before completion of the first questionnaire, all participants will receive details about the possible risks involved, like emotional distress. They will also get contact information for organizations that offer support. Participation will be purely voluntary and no incentives will be offered by IGER.

Benefits of Taking Part

Participating initiatives will receive:

- Insight into how participants may benefit from their activities.
- An independent evaluation report that can be used for promotion, funding applications, and engaging stakeholders.
- Opportunities to connect with and learn from other initiatives delivering similar activities.
- The opportunity to contribute to the development of this innovative evaluation scheme.
- Support and guidance throughout the evaluation process. This will include help assigning participant IDs, reminders to send out questionnaires, and information about the evaluation to share with participants.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible, initiatives must:

- Serve adults aged 18 years or older. If anyone under 18 attends, they should not take part in the evaluation. CPES will have research governance approval only for those aged 18 and older.
- Deliver a green exercise or nature-based initiative in Ottawa
- Aim to support the mental health and/or wellbeing of their participants
- Be community-led (by an individual or group of people), charitable, or not-for-profit in nature
- Not have previously received funding specifically for evaluation.

What Does Participation Involve?

We want to keep the effort low for participating initiatives, but some tasks will need your time. We expect a commitment of no more than two hours each month during the evaluation phase. However, the time commitment may vary based on how many people attend your initiative.

Participation will involve:

- Nominating a representative who will act as the main point of contact.
- Allocating participant ID numbers using a simple system provided by IGER.
- Emailing survey links and reminders to participants.
- Providing details about the initiative for the evaluation report. This might include who it serves and the activities provided.
- Reviewing and approving the final evaluation report.

How Pilot Initiatives will be Selected

As this is a pilot programme, we aim to include a diverse range of initiatives.

Selection will consider:

- Number of participants
- Population served
- Location in Ottawa
- Type of activities offered
- Willingness to help shape the CPES pilot via an online meeting.
- Willingness to provide feedback on the CPES pilot. This may include an online questionnaire and focus group/discussion.

Data Protection, Confidentiality, and Consent

All data collected as part of the CPES pilot will be stored in accordance with [IGER's Data Protection and Data Sharing Policy](#). Data presented in the reports produced for individual initiatives will be aggregated in such a way that responses from individual participants cannot be identified. IGER will own and manage all data collected. Raw data will not be shared with individual initiatives to preserve participant confidentiality. All participants will be fully informed of how their data will be collected, stored, and used prior to participation.

To share learning from the CPES pilot, IGER will conduct an evaluation of the pilot. This may involve sharing anonymized and aggregated data from all initiatives taking part. The evaluation will be made available on IGER's website (www.iger.ca). Findings may also be shared through papers written for academic journals, social media, and presentations to professional and public audiences.

Expression of Interest

If you would like to be considered for the CPES pilot, please complete the [expression of interest form](#) by **5:00pm on Sunday August 2, 2026**.

All initiatives will be contacted by email within two weeks of the closing date.

For further information or questions, please contact: admin@iger.ca

