
	Policy Title: Community Grants Policy	
	Date of Approval: August 13, 2024	Policy Number: FIN-001-0019
	Lead Role: Director of Community Services	Support Role: CFO
	Cross Reference:	Next Review Date:
	Council File Number: 24-5	Revision Date:

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## 1.0 Purpose

This Community Grant policy outlines:

- The three Community Grant funding streams;
- The eligibility criteria to receive a Community grant; and
- The application, evaluation and approval process to receive a Community Grant.

The Community Grant Program is designed to support Not-for-Profit community groups and individuals. The Program has three distinct funding streams and the mandate of each applicant must align for the benefit of Welland residents by delivering:

- Arts and culture programs and services;
- Events; and
- Social service programs.

The Community Grant policy aims to support Not-for-Profit community groups and individuals who provide valuable community supports and enhance the quality of life for residents through each of the three funding streams.

## 2.0 Policy Statement

The Corporation of the City of Welland (the “City”), through the Community Grant Program, strives to develop mutually beneficial relationships that support community involvement, activation and support by groups and individuals who provide services to keep Welland residents active, healthy and strengthen engagement in our community.


## 3.0 Definitions

“Arts & Culture programs and services” funding means projects, programs and services for the creation, production, presentation and distribution of arts & culture.

“Not-for-Profit” means an organization that:

- Is a registered corporation formed for the purpose of providing services, activities, programs and opportunities that improve or benefit one or more communities; and
- Is governed by a community-based volunteer Board of Directors or trustees; and
- Does not generate revenue to be distributed amongst its members, directors, officers or trustees, as the case may be, for their financial gain; and
- Reinvests any revenue remaining after expenditures into the organization to further its aims and activities

“Social Service Program” means projects, programs and services to support the local delivery of social service programs, including mental health and food security.

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“Event” means projects, programs and services for any event expenses including City services.

#### 4.0 General Provisions

The allocation of Council approved funds across these three funding streams is purposely designed to be flexible which will allow the City to support needs in the community based on the applications received annually.

Applicants will be eligible for funding annually however applicants are encouraged to become self-sustaining. Applications are more favourable when applicants apply for outside funding and have revenue sources to sustain needs. Applicants must apply for the community grant program annually. Applicants must only apply for one funding stream per year.

These three Community Grant funding streams do not limit other organizations to come forward to Council with requests for funding. In these cases, a formal funding agreement must be used and approved by City council. Formal funding agreements will be used in emergency situations and must include a defined term, and deliverables for both groups bound by contract.


#### 5.0 Eligibility

Community Grant Program (CGP) funds are available to not-for-profit organizations engaged in ongoing creation and delivery of arts and culture programs and services, special events, and various social service programs for a minimum of one year.

All applicants must:

- be active in Welland;
- provide programming or services that are open to the general public and publicized city-wide;
- demonstrate fiscal responsibility and sustainability;
- have a diversified revenue base, which can include memberships, significant earned revenue, funding from other levels of government, and support from the private sector through fund-raising activities, donations and sponsorships.

Community organizations and ad-hoc groups that operate on a not-for-profit basis but are not incorporated, may apply for community grants. Applicants that are not incorporated are eligible for a maximum of \$3,000 in funding.

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**Exceptions**

Individual artists are eligible for the Art and Culture program and services funding stream. Projects that are political or religious in nature, or that further related doctrine, are not eligible to apply.

**Ineligibility**

- For-profit organizations
- Other levels of government
- Organizations with political affiliations
- Organizations that provide grants to others
- Organizations whose activities or outcomes are inconsistent with the City of Welland’s values or goals
- Organizations whose activities may breach the Ontario Human Rights Code or Charter of Rights

**6.0 Application Process**

Community Grant applications will be considered on an annual basis. Application deadlines will be established and promoted by staff each year following the annual budget process. A public information session will be held annually to educate the public on the community grant program, including the application, evaluation and approval process. All applications must be submitted on or before the application deadline. Applications that are incomplete or not submitted by the due date will not be considered.


Community Grant application forms shall be designed to capture sufficient information about the project and applicant to assist staff in completing the eligibility review and evaluation. For organizations, this includes the disclosure of all revenue generation efforts, grants from other levels of government, reserve funds and flow-through fundraising through the provision of audited financial records. If audited financial records are not available, the applicant must provide a notice to reader/compilation engagement report with sign-off from the applicant’s board of management.

Depending on the nature and value of the requested grant, additional information may be requested after the initial application.

**7.0 Evaluation & Approval Process**

Community Grant Programs will be a competitive process, as there are many worthwhile projects and limited funds annually. Staff will review all applications for completeness and work with a team to distribute the Council approved funding envelope, using the following criteria:

1. **Demonstrated need for the project, program or service within the City of Welland:** Organization demonstrates its thorough understanding of current community needs and addresses these through its activities and partnerships in the application in an open,

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equitable and inclusive manner. The organization identifies a clear plan for how the funds will be allocated and used. (25%)

2. **Financial sustainability:** Organization demonstrates sound financial management and revenue generation (various sources of income including sponsorship, deficit reduction plan if applicable), operating surplus or reserve accounts should not exceed 25% of total operating costs without acceptable explanation (ie. Capital campaign). Board oversight and skills are appropriate for the size and scope of funding request to ensure success of the application. (25%)
3. **City Priorities, Feasibility and Performance Evaluation:** The organization demonstrates how the application meets one or more of the City’s strategic priorities. The organization has the feasibility and expertise to complete the proposed project, program or service. The organization has an identified mechanism to evaluate the effectiveness of the project, economic impact, program or service and will provide this information to the City in the post-award requirements. (20%)
4. **Strategic Direction and Previous Funding:** Organization identifies strategic goals for organizational development. The organization has clear plans to sustain themselves, develop their audience, program, service and/or participation. If applicable, the application identifies the impact of previous year’s community grant support. (15%)
5. **Other Funding / Community Support:** Organization identifies community support for the project, program or service through funding from other levels of government, foundations, sponsorship, local business, service clubs and evidence of community partnerships. (15%)


Community Grant applicants are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the evaluation criteria.

Community Grant applications are evaluated and scored by a panel of City staff. The Arts & Culture Advisory Committee (ACAC) will be relied upon to evaluate Event and Arts & Culture Funding stream applications. Staff who work directly with a community grant applicant are not eligible to evaluate any applications from that organization. Once all applications are evaluated and scored, funds will be allocated and distributed accordingly. There is no appeal process for the Community Grant Program. Unsuccessful applicants will be offered an opportunity to meet with City staff to learn about how the application can be improved for the future submissions.

## 8.0 Funding Conditions

All recipients of Community Grant funds must meet the following post-award conditions:

- Publicly acknowledge support from the City of Welland, and include a current City logo on all forms of communication related to the project, program or service;
- Only use the funding for the project, program or service as identified in the

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application. The grant recipient must request approval for any proposed material changes to the project, program or service prior to implementation. If the changes result in cancellation or significant delay, the recipient will, after consultation with staff, be required to return the applicable community grant funds received that year; and

- Report on how the funding was used and the impact of the funding. A reporting template will be provided with the notification of the community grant award. The report must be submitted within 60 days of the completion of the project, program or service. If the project, program or service continues into the next calendar year, an interim report is required before by the end of the year. No additional funding will be provided if the report is not received.

## 9.0 Responsibilities

### Council

Welland City Council is accountable for:

- Approving the annual operating budget for the Community Grant program.

### Director of Community Services


The Director of Community Services is accountable for:

- Ensuring applicable staff are aware of this policy and any subsequent revisions

### Manager of Business & Community Services

The Manager of Business & Community Services is accountable for:

- Administration of the Community Grant Program;
- Promotion of the Community Grant Program, including an annual information session;
- Reviewing all Community Grant Program applications for completeness;
- Implementing a digital Community Grant application process;
- Establishing an appropriate panel of staff to review Community Grant applications in alignment with the policy;
- Ensuring those with conflicts of interest are declared and removed from evaluating applications accordingly;
- Processing the award and distribution of Community Grant funds;
- Ensuring all funding conditions are met by recipients;
- Ensuring that unsuccessful applicants are provided feedback on how their application could be improved for future;
- Gathering feedback from the community on the Community Grant program and how it can be improved;
- Providing an annual report to Council on the distribution of Community Grant funds and the reported impact by Community Grant program recipients; and

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- Ensuring the Community Grant Policy is reviewed and updated according to policy requirements.

**Community Grant Applicants**

Community Grant applicants are accountable for:

- Ensuring the accurate completion of the Community Grant application form;
- Submitting the Community Grant application by the deadline;
- Providing any supplementary information as required; and
- Completing all funding conditions as outlined.

**10.0 Appendices**

N/A

**Revision History**

Date	Description of Change	Initials