



London
CANADA

Policy Name: London Community Grants Policy

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Service Area Lead: Manager, Neighbourhood, Strategic Initiatives and Funding
Neighbourhood, Children and Fire Services

1. Policy Statement

The objective of this Policy is to outline the criteria for the London Community Grants Program. Funding through this program will be aligned with the City of London's Strategic Plan, and will grant funding to community organizations to advance the priorities of the Strategic Plan

2. Definitions

- 2.1 **"Not-for-Profit"** refers to an organization incorporated without share capital under Part III of the *Corporations Act* or under the *Not-for-Profit Corporations Act*.
- 2.2 **"Grant Application"** refers to the application associated with each granting category.
- 2.3 **"Grant Agreement"** refers to the legal agreement that is signed after an application has been deemed successful under the City of London ("the City") Community Grants Program. The Grant Agreement defines the terms and conditions under which the City of London grant will be made and cannot be altered without prior approval.
- 2.4 **"Strategic Plan"** refers to the current City of London Strategic Plan.
- 2.5 **"Host Organization"** refers to an incorporated not-for-profit organization that may act as a sponsor to an unincorporated organization in order for the unincorporated organization to be eligible for this grant. The Host Organization will be issued funding associated with the funding activity and will assume financial and legal responsibility for the funded activity and adhere to associated reporting requirements to be outlined in the Grant Agreement.
- 2.6 **"Funder"** an organization that provides money for a particular purpose.
- 2.7 **"Procedural Error"** in reference to the Appeals Process, refers to a mistake that may have been made a result of not following the process for the allocation of grants as outlined in this Policy.

3. Applicability: Funding Categories

Applications for London Community Grants will be considered under the following categories:

3.1 Multi-Year Grants

Multi-Year Grants are up to four (4) year agreements with the City of London for community organizations pursuing initiatives in alignment with the City of London's Strategic Plan.

3.2 Innovation and Capital

- a) Innovation grants are provided to new, emerging organizations and/or initiatives that engage in dynamic community partnerships, innovative improvements to service delivery and system collaboration, and/or generate new ideas. Applications to the Innovation category must be able to demonstrate:
- Proven or promising early stage innovations that need additional support to create the capacity and conditions to be effectively sustained; and/or,
 - Creative new approaches to social innovation that engage multiple stakeholders in creative collaboration to improve system delivery, coordination, and/or generate new ideas.
- b) Capital grants are provided for projects involving construction or purchase of physical assets, including, but not limited to, land, building and associated renovation costs. Applications to the Capital category will be considered for the following purposes:
- Purchase of Land and Buildings: Grants are made in this category only when the purchase is required for the immediate capital project.
 - Construction Costs: Grants in this category will be for costs associated with new facilities or renovation costs associated with the provision of additional program/service space.

4. **The Policy**

4.1 General Program Requirements: The Grant

- a) The proposed initiative must meet the definition of the relevant funding category as outlined in Section 3 of this policy.
- b) Community need for the proposed project must clearly be demonstrated and indicate how the applicant organization is best suited to meet this need.
- c) A grant application may not be awarded funding if it is determined the proposed project is superfluous to the requirements of the community.
- d) The proposed initiative must be available to a broad cross-section of the London community.
- e) All projects must conform to all relevant legal standards and requirements and should be physically accessible to all persons.

4.2 Specific Program Requirements

- a) Innovation
- i. Considering the one-year term of funding for Innovation Grants, applications under this category will be strongly assessed for ongoing program sustainability. The Applicant must demonstrate a clear plan for how the proposed program will be funded after the term of the grant.
- b) Capital
- i. The applicant must present information that demonstrates their long-term intent to remain in the building. If funding has been received to make capital improvements to the property, the organization may be required to repay a portion of the grant back to the City in the event the property is vacated. The exact terms will be laid out in the Grant Agreement signed upon notification of the awarded grant.

- ii. All Capital projects must be either tendered or open to competitive bidding by two or more parties.
- iii. Rehabilitation and replacement of existing facilities will be preferred as opposed to projects involving the construction of new facilities.
- iv. Capital funding will not be granted for appliances or equipment. Funding will only be provided for construction costs for work that will be affixed to the building.
- v. Preference will be given to organizations that demonstrate a willingness to cooperate with the community and other organizations to share the space.
- vi. Unincorporated organizations will not be eligible to apply for Capital funding.

4.3 Eligibility

a) General Eligibility

- i. A City of London grant should not be considered as the sole source of funding for the organization. City of London grants are intended to be supplementary to other sources of funding. Organizations will be expected to leverage opportunities for funding from other funders and to provide information about other sources of funding, both received and applied to, to the City of London.
- ii. A grant made to an organization in any year is not to be regarded as a commitment by the City to continue the grant in future years.
- iii. In making grants, the City may impose conditions as it deems fit. Specific terms and conditions will be outlined in the Grant Agreement upon award of funding.
- iv. The amount of funding allocated to the municipal granting program will be confirmed each year as part of the annual budget process.

b) Organization Eligibility

- i. Organizations must be located in London (this means the organization must have an office located in London, but not necessarily the head office, and that grant supported projects must take place in London) and may be asked to provide proof of address for verification.
- ii. Only registered not-for-profit organizations, with some exclusions (noted in 6.2.7) will be considered for a grant through the London Community Grants Program.
- iii. Organizations in receipt of City of London funding (including, but not limited to Purchase of Service Agreements) will not be eligible to receive additional funding for the same project.
- iv. Agencies, Boards, and Commissions of the City of London are not eligible for grants through this program.
- v. Organizations seeking development and capital funding to support the creation of new community based supportive housing initiatives are not eligible. Organizations seeking development and capital costs to support new housing initiatives should contact the Housing Development Corporation, London (HDC) for more information.
- vi. Applicant organizations must have an active Board of Directors that is independent from senior staff of the organization.

c) Eligibility Exclusions for Unincorporated Organizations

- i. An unincorporated organization may submit an application under the Innovation category of the Innovation and Capital stream, but must officially become incorporated before any funding can be allocated to the organization.
- ii. An unincorporated organization may apply to the London Community Grants Program (Multi-Year or Innovation Category) in partnership with a Host Organization. Under this criteria, City funding will be allocated to the Host Organization in support of the funded activity, with the host organization held to accountable for the terms and conditions outlined in the Grant Agreement.
- iii. There are no eligibility exclusions for an organization's not-for-profit status under the Capital category of this program.

4.4. Financial Eligibility

- a) The organization must demonstrate strong financial responsibility and capability in carrying out its service to this community.
- b) The City of London, through its grants process will not contribute to outstanding deficits.
- c) The financial state of the organization will be reviewed through the grant application process. The City of London will not fund organizations that have a structural deficit.
- d) The organization must indicate a clear financial plan and demonstrate efficient use of City funds in the project.
- e) The organization must show that it has thoroughly explored all other available sources of funding.
- f) The organization must demonstrate fund-raising capabilities and illustrate a future plan for the project.
- g) In conjunction with a comprehensive review of the proposed initiative, funding will be directed to organizations in greater need of financial support.
- h) The organization must indicate other City contributions that are made to the organization (purchase of service, tax exemptions, etc.).

4.5 Community Review Panel

- a) Grant applications will be assessed by the community review panel in accordance with the program's respective guidelines.
 - i. A community review panel of up to 11 individuals will be convened to make decisions regarding the allocation of London Community Grants. The community review panel will be comprised of the following members:
 - Community member (2-3)
 - Expert in subject matter (specific to priorities of the Strategic Plan) (2-3)
 - Funder (1)
 - Outcomes measurement expert (1)
 - Financial expert (1)
 - City Staff (2-3)
- b) Selection
 - i. Civic Administration will seek qualified London residents to be part of the community review panel based on the composition of the Panel defined above.

- ii. Priority will be given to community members from diverse backgrounds, and staff will aim to have a cross representation of the community on the panel.
- c) Decision Making
- i. Decisions about all funding allocations will be determined by the Community Review Panel in accordance with the relevant program guidelines with the exception of capital funding requests in excess of the approved budget for the Innovation and Capital Stream. Capital funding requests in excess of the available budget will be reviewed by the Community Review Panel and, if recommended, be referred to the budget process noting that a detailed business case must be submitted as part of the budget request.
 - ii. All applications, regardless of the granting category, will be assessed for both alignment with, and ability to advance the City's Strategic Plan.

4.6 Grant Appeal Process

- a) All decisions related to grant applications for the London Community Grants Program are open to appeal by the grant applicant.
- b) Applicants to the London Community Grants Program may appeal a decision based on two criteria:
 - i. New Information: From the time the grant application was initially submitted, new information that could impact the grant decision became available that, for good reason, was not available at the time of the initial application; or,
 - ii. A Procedural Error was made when assessing the grant application.
- c) The Manager of Neighbourhood Strategic Initiatives and Funding or designate will review all appeals in accordance with the Appeals Guideline to determine which appeals meet the criteria for further review.
- d) Legitimate appeals will be referred to the Managing Director, Neighbourhood, Children and Fire Services for consideration.
- e) The Managing Director, Neighbourhood, Children and Fire Services may refer the funding appeal to any member of the Senior Management Team, depending on the relevant area of the City's Strategic Plan under which the proposed initiative has been aligned.
- f) Decisions of all appeals will be final.