Community Activation Grant

Program Framework

2023

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Grant Objectives

This new program is intended to enable Oakville residents to take the lead on activations that bring people together, make places better and enrich the community. The Community Activation Grant is intended to provide small value financial and staff advisory support to community-initiated ideas and help bring them to life. Through minor funding or 'micro' grants issued to residents, informal groups, and community organizations, this program will build capacity in the community to bring people together around a common interest, bring awareness, and/or enhance spaces. A small investment can go a long way to enrich the vibrancy and livability of Oakville for all.

Program Objectives:

- Focus on small scale community events, activities, and programs, to enhance community capacity and increase access,
- Support residents, ad-hoc groups, and not-for-profit organizations to enhance the community wellbeing for all Oakville residents by building capacity through engaging activations and project,
- Provide a user-friendly collaborative application and administration process to reduce barriers and provide opportunities,
- Prioritize new activations and projects that are that are not eligible for other direct or indirect town funding streams such as the Cultural Grant or Special Event Fee Assistance programs.

Supporting Council's strategic priority, Community Belonging, this new Community Activation Grant program will enable residents to come together to lead and implement new initiatives in their community. The program will provide financial support and staff guidance to make these small but impactful ideas come to life.

Successful grant applications will demonstrate how the project aligns with this mandate through:

1. Enhancing connectedness between neighbours:
    i. Renew or revitalize neighbourhood public and green spaces, contributing to neighbourhood beautification and celebration,
    ii. Develop stronger relationships between neighbours and neighbourhood groups, and
    iii. Entrust residents to become more actively involved in their neighbourhoods through working together as neighbours.
2. Reducing isolation and loneliness amongst older adults:
    i. Improve safety, accessibility and/or mobility.
3. Expanding access by providing programs and services to equity deserving individuals and groups (including but not limited to):
    i. Black
    ii. Indigenous
    iii. People of Colour/Racialized Residents
    iv. 2SLGBTQIA
    v. Women
    vi. Low Income
    vii. Older Adults
    viii. Newcomers

ix. Experiencing varying abilities/disabilities
x. Experiencing barriers participating in community events (e.g., domestic abuse victims, food bank patrons, etc.)
4. Championing mental health and wellness
5. Championing physical literacy and wellness
6. Championing arts and culture in the community

Applicant Eligibility

Applicants must be:

- Informal or ad-hoc group of residents:
  - Applicants must demonstrate that their informal group is composed of a minimum of five residents who live in Oakville and can provide sufficient information to substantiate the ability to operate the program or event activation. An informal or ad-hoc group will be required for any neighbourhood activation/road closure.

- Individual resident:
  - Applicant must demonstrate the proposed initiative connects to the program mandate and estimate the reach or impact of the initiative.

- Not-for-Profit Organizations:
  - The group must be a not-for-profit organization and operate under the authority of a volunteer board, committee, or individual that is elected or appointed by the general membership or group.

Applicant ineligibility:

- Organizations or activities that the town deems may promote discrimination, as defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code, and that are not inclusive.
- Political party or politician.
- Schools and/or School Boards may only apply in partnership with a neighbourhood, community group, or student group, as a sponsor and the town will liaise with the project lead that must be form the community.
- Applicant has already received town funding including grants administered by other organizations (i.e., Business Improvement Areas (BIAs), Oakville Arts Council and Sport Oakville).
- Applicant has not already received town funding for the same initiative within the same calendar year.

Project Eligibility

Projects must:

- Be offered at no cost to the community and participants.
- Occur in the Town of Oakville.
- Demonstrate that it can meet the obligations of the event.

- For neighbourhood activations that require a road closure and other similar circumstances as determined by town staff:
  - Applicant must gather the wider neighbourhood's support for the project, including, at a minimum, obtaining 70% of household signatures within 120 m of the project activation site in support of the project.

Please note existing projects are eligible but the applicant must demonstrate an enhancement to such programs (preference will be given to new activations, events, and programs before existing projects and programs).

Project ineligibility:

- Applications that are the same or similar to another approved application submitted by a different applicant in the same year.
- Political in nature.
- Projects where participation is conditional upon the religious activities of the organization.
- Initiatives that are in contradiction to any town policies or procedures.
- Volunteer and/or staff appreciation events, banquets, or awards ceremonies.
- Events that charge an admission or registration fee.
- Commercial venture and/or marketing and advertising for a private company.

Eligible Expenses

Eligible expenses include:

- Facility rentals/permits (including insurance):
  - Indoor
  - Parks
  - Community Use of Schools
- Insurance
- Food and refreshments:
  - Green consumables including paper plates, bamboo and/or wood utensils, plastic cups, garbage/recycling/compost bags
  - Halton Region garbage bag tags
- Security, policing, and first aid costs
- Audio/visual costs
- Art and craft supplies
- Equipment rentals:
  - Parks picnic tables
  - Chairs, Tables
  - Tents
  - Audio visual equipment
- Marketing and promotions:
  - Printed Materials (newspaper ads, flyers, pamphlets, banners)
  - Social Media Posts (Instagram ads, Facebook ads)

Ineligible expenses include:

- Organizational operating costs
- Staff salaries and consulting fees
- Deficit reduction funding and/or accumulated deficits
- Conference or membership fees
- Activities that charge an admission or registration fee
- Fundraising projects
- Promotion of a political party or politician
- Travel and accommodation
- Purchase of any alcohol beverages, tobacco, or cannabis products
- Expenses accruing prior to the current grant cycle
- Major capital expenditures (such as the purchase of land, buildings, building renovations, machinery and vehicles)
- Fireworks
- Single use plastic products
- Informal Groups cannot utilize grant funds for the purchase of chairs, tables, tents, sound system or any other items that need to be "owned" by someone after the event.
- Non-profit organizations are able to purchase equipment, but the equipment must remain with and be stored by the Non-Profit Organization

Application Process

Applicants need to complete the online application form. Templates are also provided online for the work plan and budget, community map, and the neighbourhood support list. Paper copes are available at town hall upon request. At this time, there is no deadline to apply for a Community Activation Grant.

Initial evaluation of all applications will be completed by the Community Development team. Depending on the type of application and activation (i.e., indoor, outdoor public space, or neighbourhood road closure), staff will identify additional departments internally to provide assistance with the review as. The application review process can take up to eight weeks to complete.

Applications will be evaluated based on their ability to demonstrate and enhance a sense of community belonging with one or more key targeted needs (as outlined in the *Program Mandate,* pg. 3), project and applicant eligibility, overall strength of the application, ease of implementation, and the communication and work plan for the application.

Supplementary information will be beneficial to the town to help illustrate and summarize the application. Multiple templates are available to help assist applicants compete their community map, communications and work plan, and budget, etc. Please use these templates as needed.

Successful approved grant submissions will require the applicants to enter into an agreement for the disbursement of funds. Funds will be disbursed approximately two weeks after the signed agreement is received. All funds must be spent as documented in the application submission and project guidelines. Applicants agree to report back upon completion of the

project, within 60 days, including an accounting of all expenses, with proof of purchases, if requested. Receipts are not required to be submitted but the applicant must keep all receipts/ proof of purchases with them for a period of 12 months. Eligibility for future grants will be impacted if the report is not completed.

Submissions that may require further elaboration, or are not successful, will be followed up on by town staff. Unsuccessful applicants may submit an appeal to the Community Development team in the case where it can be demonstrated that the information in the application was misunderstood in the assessment process. All appeals will be reviewed by the Director of Recreation and Culture.

Community Activation Grant Matrix

CAG Application Submission

Internal Staff Review

Approved

Further Elaboration

Not Approved

Signing of Agreement

Staff Follow Up with Applicant for application modification

Staff follow up with applicant identifying rationale

Disbursement of Fund

Appeal Process: Forwarded to Director, Recreation and Culture

Final report submitted after 60 days