Cultural Funding Policy

Approved by:
Approval date:
Effective date:
Revision approved by:
Revision/review date:

Policy statement

The City of Ottawa is committed to supporting community-led cultural activities that reflect and celebrate Ottawa's diverse communities through grants and contributions, and to a fair, inclusive and equitable disbursement of cultural funding through Council-approved programs.

Purpose

This policy establishes guiding values, principles, program structure and objectives, and processes used to develop, administer, and monitor City of Ottawa cultural funding programs.

This policy defines processes unique to cultural funding programs and complements the corporate Grants and Contributions Policy and Procedures.

Application

This policy applies to all cultural funding grants and contributions programs, and to all City of Ottawa staff and peer assessors involved in the administration and allocation of funds through these programs.

This policy does not apply to funds administered through other support mechanisms identified, such as purchase of service agreements, internal transfers, emergency loans, or any other agreement falling under the [Delegation of Authority (By-law No. 2024-265)](#) that is not a grant or contribution.

Policy requirements

The following is an overview of considerations and requirements to ensure all elements of the cultural funding programs and processes align with the City of Ottawa cultural funding mandate and principles and provide fair and equitable access to funds.

Cultural funding mandate

- To reflect and recognize the contributions that culture makes to a healthy, vibrant and thriving community by investing annually in local, not-for-profit organizations, as well as artists and cultural workers, and
- To support arts, heritage and cultural activities that celebrate Ottawa's diverse communities.

City of Ottawa cultural funding principles:
- **Values culture:** The City of Ottawa values the contribution culture makes to a healthy and vibrant community and supports community-led cultural programming and services through its cultural funding programs.
- **Acknowledges Anishinabe Algonquin territory and commits to reconciliation**: The City of Ottawa is built on un-ceded territory of the Anishinabe Algonquin Nation, whose culture and presence have nurtured and continue to nurture this land. The City of Ottawa honours all 11 Anishinabe Algonquin First Nations, urban First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples, and is committed to supporting cultural activities that align with the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, fostering healing and understanding within the community.
- **Prioritizes equitable access to funding**: The City of Ottawa applies an equity and inclusion lens to funding applications from Anishinabe Algonquin Nation, urban First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, and other communities marginalized by colonialism and racism, including individuals from varied ancestries, abilities, ages, countries of origin, cultures, genders, incomes, languages, races, and sexual orientations.
- **Commits to bilingualism**: The City of Ottawa applies an equity and inclusion lens to funding applications and processes to reflect the equality of both official languages, English and French, granting them equal rights, status, and privileges, and accepts funding applications in both languages.
- **Commits to accountability and transparency:** The City of Ottawa, as stewards of public funds, commits to a transparent and fair funding process that uses a peer-assessment process and is service-focused.
- **Supports freedom of expression:** The City of Ottawa supports the right to freedom of expression as protected under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom.

Cultural funding principles align with [The City of Ottawa - Anishinabe Algonquin Nation Civic Cultural Protocol and Implementation Plan (2022-2026)](#) and are in accordance with [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#) - UNDRIP, the [City of Ottawa Anti-Racism Strategy](#), and the City of Ottawa [Equity and Inclusion Lens Handbook](#), to ensure that everyone benefits from cultural funding programs.

Cultural funding program objectives and priorities

Cultural funding programs shall align with City and departmental priorities and be developed in consultation with the community. This ensures that funding investment responds to cultural sector needs and that funded activities benefit Ottawa residents. Funding objectives and priorities shall be publicly available as part of program guidelines on ottawa.ca.

Additional tools shall be implemented to support applications from members of the Anishinabe Algonquin First Nations, urban First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, as well as other communities marginalized by colonialism and racism, including individuals from varied ancestries, abilities, ages, countries of origin, cultures, genders, incomes, languages, races, and sexual orientations. These mechanisms include:
- dedicated programs allowing for targeted investment,
- publicly stating funding priorities,
- increasing representation on peer assessment committees,
- ongoing revisions of programs and guidelines to eliminate any bias when speaking about culture, and
- continued partnership and guidance from the Cultural Funding Support Unit's Equity and Inclusion Committee.

Cultural funding programs and additional support mechanisms

The following chart indicates the structure of City of Ottawa cultural funding programs and additional support mechanisms:

Figure 1 - Cultural funding programs and additional support mechanisms

Grants and contributions programs	Core funding programs	Arts Funding Program
		Heritage Funding Program
		Indigenous Culture Program
		Equity and Inclusion in the Arts program
	Project-based funding programs	Cultural Facilities Fund - Minor
		Cultural Facilities Fund - Major
		Capacity Building Program
		Youth in Culture Program
	Awards programs	Ottawa Book Awards/Prix du livre d'Ottawa
		Karsh Award
Additional support mechanisms		Emergency loans
		Purchase of service agreements
		Endowment fund

Cultural funding program objectives

Core funding programs

Core funding programs support local non-profit cultural organizations and individuals delivering cultural programming and services. Funding categories available in these programs include: project, annual operating and multi-year operating funding.

Arts Funding Program objectives:

- To spark and support the creation, production, presentation, exhibition, and dissemination of the arts within Ottawa;
- To support the instructional, training and service organizations that foster the development of the arts in Ottawa;
- To support community-based artistic activities that develop local arts audiences and engage communities through the arts; and
- To support local artists of all disciplines and backgrounds.

Heritage Funding objectives:
The Heritage Funding Program supports activities and programming undertaken by individuals or organizations that promote, or support community heritage, Anishinabe Algonquin Nation history and the telling of Ottawa stories through:

- education, awareness and appreciation;
- historical research, exhibits, publications, visitor services or documentation;
- professional heritage services and activities;
- facility operations and collections management; and/or
- preservation of heritage assets.

Indigenous Culture Program objectives:
The Indigenous Culture Fund supports activities undertaken by Indigenous individuals or Indigenous-led organizations that promote or support: the presentation, reclamation, retention, transmittal, development, celebration and revitalization of Anishinabe Algonquin Nation, urban First Nations, Inuit and Métis heritage and culture (past and present).

Equity and Inclusion in the Arts Program objectives:
Reduce barriers and advance artistic expression within equity-denied communities by providing opportunities for:

- self-expression: encourage and inspire self-expression by Ottawa's diverse artists and communities to support artistic growth, engagement, and leadership;

- capacity building: support inclusive knowledge-sharing between communities that builds resources and services for Indigenous and equity-denied communities and artists; and/or
- visibility and celebration: provide opportunities to share, highlight and celebrate diverse arts practices.

Project-based funding programs

Project-based funding programs provide project funding for cultural facilities improvements and capacity building initiatives.

Cultural Facilities Fund objectives:
- To improve local cultural facilities and venues in the city of Ottawa by providing grants to eligible cultural organizations for facility projects, equipment purchases (fixed and non-fixed), capital feasibility studies or major capital initiatives.

Cultural Facilities Fund (Minor capital projects)
This program is designed to assist local cultural organizations in improving cultural facilities, venues and the purchasing of equipment. The City will provide funding to successful organizations to a maximum of $15,000.

Cultural Facilities Fund (Major capital projects)
The Cultural facilities fund is designed to improve cultural spaces and facilities across the city of Ottawa. This program provides cultural organizations with funds for major capital projects (i.e. land purchase, renovation, construction, expansion, restoration projects, purchase of specialized equipment) with costs exceeding $60,000, and capital studies (prefeasibility and feasibility).

Capacity building Program objectives:

- To assist Ottawa's local cultural organizations build organizational capacity and sustainability at key milestones in their development.
- To assist Ottawa's local arts and heritage administrators build professional capacity in their field.

Youth in Culture Program objectives:

- To support youth aged 18 to 30 working towards professional careers in arts, culture and heritage.
- To empower youth to identify and address needs and gaps in their career development and support their project goals.

Awards Programs

Award Programs celebrate excellence in culture through recognition and financial awards.

Ottawa Book Awards/Prix du livre d'Ottawa objectives
- To recognize literary excellence by awarding prizes to the top English and French books written by local authors.

Karsh Award
- To recognize a local mid-career or established artist for their outstanding body of work and their significant contribution to the artistic discipline in a photo/lens-based medium.

Additional Support Mechanisms

Emergency loans
- To provide bridge financing in the form of short-term, interest-free loans of up to $25,000 to assist local, not-for-profit cultural organizations with short-term cash-flow difficulties.

Purchase of service agreements
The City may enter into agreements with community partners that will deliver cultural services and programming on its behalf. Services provided by the community include management of a city-owned asset or delivery of a service. These agreements fall under the City of Ottawa's Delegation of Authority (By-law No. 2024-265).

Rich Little Endowment Fund for the Performing Arts
The Rich Little Endowment Fund provides awards to local emerging artists in support of their acquisition of professional skills and the development of their artistic abilities. The recipients are selected by local performing arts training organizations acting as third-party recommenders. These awards are funded through the interest generated by the Rich Little Endowment Fund for the Arts.

Funding application process

All cultural funding programs governed by this policy shall be application-based, with guidelines and applications forms available on ottawa.ca a minimum of two months prior to the application deadline.

Applications must be received by the stated deadline. Late or incomplete applications will be deemed ineligible. Application deadlines shall be separately developed for each program with consideration of community needs, City budget cycle, and operational requirements to deliver funding programs within a reasonable timeframe.

Basic criteria for the design of application forms are as follows:
- simple and clear
- tailored to the funding stream and program objectives
- directly related to publicly stated assessment criteria
- available in both official languages
- in an accessible format
- emulating application format and information required of other granting agencies, wherever possible

As per requirements outlined in the City of Ottawa Accessibility Policy, and in compliance with the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act](#), staff shall ensure that cultural funding programs are delivered to people with disabilities in a manner that provides equitable opportunity and takes into consideration a person's disability when providing application support.

Funding categories

Cultural funding programs support culture through a variety of funding categories and allow access for a wide range of applicants and activities.

Applicants select the category with objectives and eligibility requirements their proposed activities are best aligned with. Staff may recommend other categories in cases where the selected category may not provide the applicant with the best chance for success, or in cases when the applicant or application is not eligible for their chosen category. Eligibility and movement between categories is subject to staff approval. Staff can reject an application only if it is ineligible or when, in the sole discretion of the City, the application presents a significant risk to the City.

Funding categories for organizations:
- **Projects** are to be carried out within a specific timeframe and consist of activities and expenses related to that project.
- **Annual operating** provides support for a cultural organization's operations for one year.
- **Multi-year operating** provides support for a cultural organization's operations for more than one year under one funding agreement.

Funding categories for individuals:
- **Projects** are to be carried out within a specific timeframe with activities and expenses related to that project.
- **Awards** are prizes that recognize excellence in a cultural field.

Eligibility

Program guidelines shall include publicly available eligibility requirements to ensure cultural funding supports local, Ottawa-based organizations, artists and cultural workers that offer programming, activities and services that impact the Ottawa community and align with the objectives of each program.

Eligibility is reviewed and approved by staff once an application is submitted. Meeting eligibility requirements does not guarantee funding. Staff reserve the right to request additional information in cases where eligibility is in question based on submitted application materials.

All applicants must meet the below eligibility criteria.

Individual applicants must be:

- 18 years or older,
- a resident of the city of Ottawa, and
- an artist, cultural worker, heritage professional, community connector, or an elder or cultural keeper recognized by their peers.

If a member of an Anishinabe Algonquin First Nation, applicants must be:
- 18 years or older,
- a member of an Anishinabe Algonquin First Nation,
- living in Ottawa, on Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation or Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation, or living within a 150 kms radius of Ottawa, and
- an artist, cultural worker, heritage professional, community connector, or an elder or cultural keeper recognized by their peers.

An eligible organization must be:

- local and Ottawa-based,
- not-for-profit,
- mandated in culture or partner with a local not-for-profit cultural organization or a local professional artist/heritage professional/community elder/culture keeper,
- operated in a non-discriminatory manner, as set out by the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act,
- have an active board of directors composed of a minimum of three members,
- have at least 50% of board directors residing in the Ottawa region,
- have the majority of their programming and event(s) occurring within the limits of the city of Ottawa, or an Anishinabe Algonquin First Nation, and
- have the office and official mailing address within the limits of the city of Ottawa.

In the case of organizations led by members of an Anishinabe Algonquin First Nation, the organization must be:

- not-for-profit,
- mandated in culture or partner with a local not-for-profit cultural organization or a local professional artist/heritage professional/community elder/culture keeper
- operated in a non-discriminatory manner, as set out by the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act
- have an active board of directors composed of a minimum of three members,
- have the majority of their programming and event(s) occurring within the limits of the city of Ottawa, within an Anishinabe Algonquin First Nation or the Ottawa region, and
- have the office and official mailing address within Ottawa, Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation or Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation.

Unincorporated organizations or collectives must also:

- have a minimum of three professional artists, cultural leaders, elders or cultural professionals residing in Ottawa, Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation or Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation. If there are additional members of the organization or collective, 50% of the total membership must reside in the Ottawa region or an Anishinabe Algonquin First Nation, and
- be able to receive payment in the collective's name.

Restrictions

The following applicants are not eligible for support through cultural funding programs:
- government agencies and for-profit organizations
- organizations whose sole purpose is to fundraise for the benefit of a third party
- organizations whose activities come under the jurisdiction of other City departments which include, but are not limited to Business Improvement Associations, Ottawa Tourism, Ottawa Film Office or other levels of government (school boards, hospitals, universities, military programs, etc.)
- political parties
- organizations that receive operating funding from another cultural funding program (exception: project-based funding programs)
- organizations whose activities are solely for their membership
- organizations where participation is conditional upon partaking in the religious or political activities of the organization

Funding restrictions:
- Funding cannot be used to increase a surplus or offset an existing financial deficit.

- Organizations with a significant accumulated surplus or deficit are ineligible for project funding.

City of Ottawa staff restrictions:
- Recreation, Cultural, and Facility Services Department staff may not hold leadership or decision-making positions within an organization requesting cultural funding, except where staff participation is an approved duty.
- City of Ottawa employees or elected representatives and their staff may not apply for cultural funding or awards as individuals.

Assessment process

Peer assessment process

All cultural funding programs shall use a competitive peer assessment model in the evaluation process, with assessment committees comprised of cultural professionals active within their field. Assessment committees convene to evaluate funding submissions according to stated assessment criteria. The assessment committee also establishes priority rankings based on the merit of each application and makes funding recommendations to the Department.

Staff responsible for the cultural funding program recruit, select and instruct outside assessors to form the appropriate assessment committees for each funding stream. Staff must strive to create a balanced representation of diversity of content, program and discipline expertise, as well as fair representation of official languages, gender, geographic areas and culture-specific communities.

Cultural funding officers shall select peer assessment jurors based on the following criteria:
- level of activity within their cultural community,
- professional or recognized expertise within specific fields of related work,
- reflective of the applicants being assessed,
- awareness of a broad range of artistic, heritage and/or cultural activities,
- understanding of the diversity of the local cultural community,
- ability to work collaboratively towards consensus in a group-decision making situation,
- commitment to a fair and equitable decision-making process,
- ability to review and assess an application in the official language it was submitted in, and
- adherence to conflict-of-interest considerations.

Peer assessment committees shall not include City of Ottawa employees except when reviewing applications in support of major capital development projects impacting a City-owned property. In such cases, one City of Ottawa employee may be selected to sit on the peer assessment committee.

Selected peer assessors are paid a standard jury fee for services provided to the City by submitting invoices as per [Procurement (By-law No. 2000 – 50)](). The fee for service schedule is set by staff, balancing allocated budget, industry standards, and a reasonable fee for service.

Assessment criteria

Assessment criteria are publicly stated in program guidelines. Developed through community consultations, these criteria align with program objectives and focus on the following areas for each funding program and stream:
- Merit (artistic, heritage, cultural)
- Demonstrated impact (community, discipline, etc.)
- Viability (financial and organizational)
- Demonstrated financial need

Conflict of interest

Before participating in an assessment committee, potential peer assessors must sign the Conflict of Interest Declaration, wherein any perceived or actual conflict of interest must be declared.

Peer assessors must declare a conflict of interest in the following situations:
- if they are employed by, or are a member of, the board of directors of an applicant organization,
- if they have financial interest in the success or failure of an applicant's programming, services or project and/or have any recent or upcoming contractual relationship with the applicant,
- if an applicant's programming, services or project involves a spouse/live-in partner or an immediate family member,
- if they have a personal interest in specific applications above and beyond what is reasonably expected from a member of the cultural community,
- if they are engaged in a legal dispute with the applicant, or
- if, for any other reason, they are unable to objectively assess an application.

When a conflict of interest is declared, measures will be taken to ensure the integrity and impartiality of the peer assessment process, up to and including abstention from participation in the assessment process.

City of Ottawa staff are subject to conflict-of-interest provisions under the Grants and Contributions Policy and the City's Code of Conduct. Staff administering grants and contributions programs are required to sign an annual Declaration for Conflicts of Interest Pertaining to Grants and Contributions.

Confidentiality

Information provided on the application form and/or in support material, may be made available to City of Ottawa staff and assessors. All information contained therein shall be dealt with on a confidential basis pursuant to the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA).

Jurors and independent assessors are required to sign a Confidentiality Declaration and are required to treat both the contents of the applications and the deliberations of the committee as confidential, including proprietary information. A juror or independent assessor shall not copy, distribute, or grant access to funding application material to any other person.

At the end of the assessment process, access to online application materials will be revoked. Peer assessors must then destroy and dispose of any physical application materials in their possession and delete any related electronic documents.

Right to reconsideration

All funding results are final. Reconsideration is permitted only if substantial evidence, as determined by city staff, shows the application was not assessed per the publicly stated criteria and procedures. If reconsideration is granted, the application, as submitted by the program deadline, will be re-evaluated by peer assessors. A reconsideration does not guarantee funding or an increase in funding.

Funding agreements

Applicants receiving cultural funding contributions must enter into Funding Agreements with the City. Staff will work with Legal Services to ensure that appropriate documents are in place for all cultural funding contributions.

Funding agreement terms and conditions are agreed to by the applicant at the time of application and shall include clauses related to:
- time frame,
- purpose of funding,
- use of funds,
- repayment of funding allocation (including in cases of breaches any of the provisions of Human Rights Code, 1981, as amended, or other applicable legislation, regulations, or by-laws),
- audit requirements,
- indemnity and liability,
- insurance,
- Occupational Health and Safety and Workplace Safety,
- dispute resolution,
- reporting requirements,

- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA), and
- additional terms.

For operating groups, terms and conditions will be counter-signed per delegated authority levels as specified in the Delegation of Authority (By-law No. 2024-265).

The signed terms and conditions, result letter, and funding application together constitute the Funding Agreement. Additional terms in a result letter include:
- amount of funding awarded,
- program-specific reporting requirements,
- acknowledgement of City support requirements, and
- changes to funded activities.

Partial or full repayment may be required if Funding Agreement terms and conditions are breached.

Awards are subject to terms and conditions, but do not require execution of a Funding Agreement.

Changes to funded activities

Applicants must immediately notify staff of significant changes in activities, finances, mandate, policies, or board of director composition. Staff will review these changes to ensure they align with the original application, maintain eligibility, uphold the Funding Agreement, and meet program objectives and principles.

Failure to notify staff, or changes unapproved by staff, may result in partial or full repayment of the funding contribution.

Reporting

Reporting requirements for successful applicants

All funding recipients are required to submit a final report detailing their use of awarded funds. Reporting requirements are outlined in the Funding Agreement. Reporting questions and required support materials shall be listed on ottawa.ca.

A report must be submitted and approved by whichever of the following comes first:
- completion of the funded activities,
- twelve months after receipt of the funds, or
- at the time of subsequent application to the program.

Without final report approval, the applicant will be deemed ineligible for subsequent funding through the same program. Applicants with outstanding reports may be deemed ineligible for any subsequent funding from any cultural funding program.

Staff have the right to request information above and beyond the stated reporting requirements in cases where the contents in the report are in question.

Award recipients are not required to report on use of funds.

Reporting on cultural funding results

Full results for all cultural funding programs and awards, including recipient names, amounts awarded, and evaluation committee members, will be posted publicly on ottawa.ca in the Cultural Funding Summary Report by the end of Q1 of the following year.

Administration of finances

City Council approves the funding envelope for cultural funding programs through the annual City budget process. Funding Agreements are approved per Delegation of Authority (By-law No. 2024-265) authorization.

Peer assessors provide funding priorities and make funding recommendations to staff based on either rankings or several budget scenarios. Staff shall finalize allocations based on:
- available cultural funding budget,
- peer assessor recommendations,
- ranking or priority of applications,
- consistency within programs with multiple peer assessment committees, and
- stated cultural funding priorities.

Final allocations are submitted to the delegated authority for approval via payment requests. All funding is subject to Funding Agreement terms. Amounts awarded may be lower than amounts requested.

For returning operating funding recipients, staff may issue advances of up to 25% in an application year, and up to 50% in a reporting year, of operating funding received in the previous year. Advances will only be released to organizations in good standing, with demonstrated financial viability, and/or as subject to standing agreements.

A portion of funding may be held back if significant risk to an organization's viability exists. In such cases, organizations will be required to provide programming and/or governance updates, as well as updated cashflow statements, before additional funds are released.

Funding must not be used to increase a surplus or to offset an existing financial deficit. Current applicants in the operating streams may be required to submit deficit reduction plans or surplus spending plans.

Risk mitigation

Staff shall take a risk-based approach to streamline application and reporting processes, ensuring oversight while simplifying procedures. Risk will be assessed based on the following:

- governance,
- requirements of funding stream (project, annual operating, or multi-year operating),
- financial viability,
- transparency of information available to the City,
- amount of City funding requested and/or awarded,
- organizational history,
- operational capacity, and
- level of collaboration with other community agencies.

Responsibilities

City Council

- Approve the total funding envelope for cultural funding programs
- Approve the addition or removal of programs within the Cultural Funding Policy

General Manager, RCFS

- Receives and considers peer assessor jury recommendations as per spending identified in the Delegation of Authority By-Law
- Approves funding agreements and payments as per spending identified in the Delegation of Authority By-Law
- Oversees and approves the resolution of accepted Right to Reconsideration requests

BTSS Manager, RCFS

- Receives and considers peer assessor jury recommendations as per spending identified in the Delegation of Authority By-Law
- Approves funding agreements and payments as per spending identified in the Delegation of Authority By-Law
- Approval of payment requisitions as per funding recommendations made through the peer assessment process

Program Manager, Arts and Heritage Development Branch

- Receives and considers peer assessor jury recommendations as per spending identified in the Delegation of Authority By-Law
- Approves funding agreements and payments as per spending identified in the Delegation of Authority By-Law
- Monitors and ensures adherence to applicable policies and processes
- Approves right to reconsideration requests
- Reviews final funding allocations and submits to delegated authority for approval

Portfolio Manager, Cultural Funding

- Shall be designated Program Owner of grants and contributions programs within the Cultural Funding Policy
- Maintains and oversees compliance with the Cultural Funding Policy
- Maintains and oversees compliance with the Grants and Contributions Policy and Procedures in the development, administration, monitoring and documentation of programs
- Monitors the distribution of funds in conjunction with Finance and Corporate Services
- Monitors adherence to confidentiality and conflict of interest obligations
- Approves standard jury fees for service
- Prepares cultural funding final allocations documents

Cultural Funding Support Unit staff

- Act in compliance with the City of Ottawa Employee Code of Conduct and all applicable laws and regulations
- Assess eligibility of submissions to cultural funding programs
- Provide applicant support, as required
- Ensure that all required program information is posted on ottawa.ca
- Select peer assessors
- Assess the nature and extent of any peer assessor conflict of interest, and determines whether to rescind participation of that peer assessor in the evaluation process
- Chair peer assessment committees and provide direction on program objectives, process and priorities
- Send funding results to applicants
- Provide jury evaluation summaries to applicants, when requested

Finance and Corporate Services Department

- Post Grants and Contributions program recipients and payments annually, on ottawa.ca, by June 30 of the following year
- Promote and facilitate collaboration among departments on the administration of grants and contributions and the sharing of best practices
- Coordinate an annual meeting of Grants and Contributions Program Owners to share best practices for program administration
- Engage in internal stakeholder consultations to solicit feedback on emerging issues and process improvements
- Maintain the Grants and Contributions Program Register
- Address contraventions of the Grants and Contributions Policy with the program owner
- Escalate any serious contraventions to the department General Manager and the Policy owner
- Review the annual compliance self-assessment checklists or attestations from program owners to determine if there are any compliance issues requiring management's attention

Finance Support Unit
- Manage financial reporting for cultural funding programs
- Ensure the City's financial coding structure is used appropriately and consistently
- Provide support to staff in reviewing financial information
- Assist staff in the budget reconciliation
- Coordinates the review of financial data for the Department prior to posting on ottawa.ca
- Submit the Departmental Grants and Contributions report to the Grants and Contributions Compliance Coordinator
- Facilitate the development of efficient payment processes between units

Finance Shared Services
- Process allocation payments to cultural funding recipients
- Ensure cultural funding allocation payments are made in accordance with City policies and procedures
- Ensure that allocation payments are released within 14 days of requisition

Legal Services

- Work with Cultural Funding staff to ensure appropriate documents are in place for all Cultural Funding, which outline the terms and conditions of funding
- Ensure that all documents contain appropriate provisions related to insurance, audit, privacy, accessibility and occupational health and safety

- As requested by Cultural Funding staff, review, stamp and initial any funding agreements as "Approved for Execution"
- Support Cultural Funding staff as required

Monitoring/Contraventions

All City staff involved in the delivery of cultural funding programs are responsible for maintaining compliance with the Cultural Funding Policy. Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal as outlined in the Discipline Policy.

All funding applicants are contractually obligated to adhere to the terms and conditions outlined in the Funding Agreement. Failure to comply may result in repayment of funds, and/or suspension for a specific period, including on a long-term or indefinite basis, from applying for cultural funding through the City of Ottawa.

References

[A Renewed Action Plan for Arts Heritage and Culture in Ottawa (2013-2018)](#)
[Accessibility Policy](#)
[Bilingualism Policy](#)
[Bilingualism Policy](#)
[City of Ottawa Anti-Racism Strategy](#)
Cultural Funding Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Policies and Declaration
[Employee Code of Conduct](#)
[Equity and Inclusion Lens](#)
[Grants and Contributions Policy](#)
[Grants and Contributions Procedures](#)
[Records Management Policy](#)
[The City of Ottawa - Anishinabe Algonquin Nation Civic Cultural Protocol and Implementation Plan (2022-2026)](#)

Legislative and administrative authorities

[Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. 2005, S.O. 2005, c.11](#)
[Bilingualism By-law](#)
[The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#)
[Delegation of Authority (By-law No. 2024-265)](#)
[Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001 c. 25, as amended](#)
[Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O 1990, c. M.56](#)
[Occupational Health and Safety Act](#)
[Ontario Human Rights Code](#)
[Procurement (By-law No. 2000 – 50)](#)
[United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#)

Recordkeeping requirements

As per the Records Management Policy, Official Business Records generated as a result of the execution of this policy must be declared as such in the appropriate SharePoint site, RMS (Records Management System) or approved business system.

Definitions

Arts: For the purposes of this Policy, the arts encompass a wide range of disciplines including the performing, literary, media and visual arts, as well as emerging practices and traditional artistic expressions. This includes non-Western cultural artistic practices, ensuring the representation of Indigenous and equity-denied artists. Based on community consultations, arts practices and programming/services supported by cultural funding programs include the following: arts festivals, arts services, arts venues, community-focused arts (programming that focuses on community engagement through participatory arts practices, as well as arts training and instruction), interdisciplinary arts, literary arts, performing arts (including music, dance, theatre, etc.), and visual and media arts.

Assessment criteria: Clearly stated and measurable indicators within a funding program that are used to evaluate and assess each application in a consistent, comparative manner.

Awards: a monetary prize and recognition for cultural excellence in the form of an unconditional transfer payment (grant).

Collective: a group of three or more artists or cultural professionals working together under a group name, either on a single project or on an ongoing basis. A collective must be able to receive payment in its name.

Colonialism: Colonialism is a practice of domination, which involves the subjugation of one people to another. Settler colonialism — such as in the case of Canada — is the unique process where the colonizing population does not leave the territory, asserts ongoing sovereignty to the land, actively seeks to assimilate the Indigenous populations and extinguish their cultures, traditions and ties to the land.

Contributions: Conditional transfer payments to an individual or organization that are subject to being accounted for or audited. Performance objectives and reporting requirements must be specified in a funding agreement.

Culture: Culture means different things to different people. For the purposes of administering this policy culture refers to the support of local, not-for-profit arts, heritage, festival and cultural organizations, as well as local artists and cultural workers. Funded activities include arts, heritage and cultural programming and services that reflect a broad representation of communities within Ottawa and the Anishinabe Algonquin Nation. The definition is intentionally broad to allow for new and under-represented cultural practices to emerge and be supported.

Grants: Unconditional transfer payments to an individual or organization that are not subject to being accounted for or audited. Recipients are required to sign off on the terms and conditions of funding and may need to report on results achieved for accountability purposes. Within the context of cultural funding, awards fall under grants.

Grants or contributions programs: Programs approved by City Council that provide funding to local organizations or individuals for projects or initiatives that help to achieve Council priorities and City program objectives. The City, as a corporation, does not directly receive goods or services in return for grants and contributions payments. The beneficiaries of grants and contributions are city residents or local organizations who receive the funding.

Internal transfer of funds: Funds being allocated under this policy that are not approved by City Council through the annual City budget process. These funds are transferred from other established cost centers (for example, revenues generate through an Endowment Fund) to fund awards or grants.

Local heritage: Activities that increase awareness and appreciation of the distinct history and heritage, both tangible and intangible, of the Anishinabe Algonquin Nation and Ottawa. These activities may include initiatives in history, archival science, museology, conservation, preservation, genealogy, heritage education and interpretation, archaeology, commemoration, anthropology, and related disciplines. Additionally, training and services are integral components supporting the development and sustainability of heritage in Ottawa.

Multi-year funding: Stable, multi-year operating funding for established cultural organizations that have a demonstrated track record and have the ability to prepare and implement a multi-year operational plan. Typically, multi-year funding is for a three-year term.

Operating funding: Core funding for arts and heritage organizations that have demonstrated consistent merit based on self-defined mandate.

Organization: a collective or incorporated not-for-profit organization that is in good standing and is governed by a Steering Committee/Board of Directors with a minimum of three members.

Peer assessment: Use of peers (for example, practicing artists, historians, arts professionals, heritage professionals and others who are knowledgeable and active in the local arts, heritage or cultural community) to assess grant applications, advise on priorities based on the publicly stated assessment criteria, and by consensus arrive at recommendations on the disbursement of grants.

Professional artist: The City of Ottawa defines a professional artist as someone recognized by artists working in the same artistic tradition, has a reasonable body of professional work, has a history of public presentation or publication, seeks payment for their work and is dedicated to the independent practice of art in their chosen discipline.

Program owner: The departmental staff member who is responsible for administering the grants and contributions programs or supervising the staff who handle the program administration.

Project funding: Funding for an activity that is to be carried out within a specific timeframe and consist of activities and expenses related to that project.

Purchase of service agreements: Conditional payments for services delivered by nongovernmental organizations for services where it is the City's mandate to deliver the service and the City's Purchasing By-law No. 2000-50, as amended, applies. Payments made under community association/recreation board programs, where not-for-profit community partners provide services to the City and/or to the public on behalf of the City, are examples of purchases of service.

Racism: Historically, racism is a rooted system of power hierarchies based on race—infused in our institutions, policies, and culture—that benefits White people and hurts racialized people. Racism isn't limited to individual acts of prejudice, either deliberate or accidental. Rather, the most damaging racism is built into the systems and institutions that shape our lives.

Risk-based approach: The identification, prioritization, and management of risks for a more proportional and effective allocation of resources and efforts by applicants and staff.

Enquiries

For more information on this policy, contact:

Portfolio Manager
Cultural Funding Support Unit
Arts and Heritage Development Branch
Business and Technical Support Services
Recreation, Cultural and Facility Services