



Hamilton

2026

City Enrichment Fund

Community Services
Program Handbook –
Organizational Capacity Building



Contents: Revised September 19, 2025

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CITY ENRICHMENT FUND – CITY OF HAMILTON

The City Enrichment Fund is a program of the City of Hamilton. Applicants are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the City of Hamilton's Urban Indigenous Strategy and consider how these initiatives can be integrated in their organization/program.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The City of Hamilton is situated upon the traditional territories of the Erie, Neutral, Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee and Mississaugas. This land is covered by the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, which was an agreement between the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabek to share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. We further acknowledge that this land is covered by the Between the Lakes Purchase, 1792, between the Crown and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

Today, the City of Hamilton is home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island (North America) and we recognize that we must do more to learn about the rich history of this land so that we can better understand our roles as residents, neighbours, partners and caretakers.

To learn more about the City of Hamilton's Urban Indigenous Strategy – see:



URBAN INDIGENOUS STRATEGY - CITY OF HAMILTON

COMMUNITY SERVICES PROGRAM AREA – OVERALL GOALS

To strengthen the human services system by funding programs that:

- Meet current or emerging community priorities
- Support the growth of new programs
- Engage equity-deserving groups.
- Foster Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA¹)
- Address underserved target groups
- Promote systems change and explore service delivery innovation
- Invest in the organizational capacity of the local human services sector

All programs funded through the Community Services Program will support Hamilton's community vision, Our Future Hamilton. Learn more about [Our Future Hamilton](#).

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING STREAM

This stream supports one-time funding for internal facing projects that strengthen the organizational capacity and resiliency. Examples of eligible projects may include: strategy development, organizational plans, organizational level professional development initiatives, financial records, governance documents, policy improvements and advancing inclusion, diversity, equity (IDEA) and accessibility.

Objective

To increase the effectiveness and resiliency of the human services sector at the organizational level by enabling it to enhance program delivery, implement best practices, advance Inclusion, IDEA initiatives, identify continuous improvement processes and remain fiscally viable.

¹ To learn more about how the City of Hamilton operates from the IDEA framework - see [IDEA - CITY OF HAMILTON](#)

FOLLOW THESE STEPS TO APPLY FOR A GRANT

- ☐ Read the City Enrichment Fund General Guidelines
- ☐ Read the Community Services Handbook for the Stream for which you are requesting funding
- ☐ Use the Application Questions section of this handbook as a reference when completing your application. Complete all questions.
- ☐ Ensure that you provide the answer you want adjudicators to score ***within*** the space provided directly on the application form. Do not redirect adjudicators to find responses elsewhere in your application
- ☐ Upload all mandatory documents (use the checklist to confirm that you have submitted all attachments) and any others you would

COMMUNITY SERVICES - ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

These guidelines are in addition to the City Enrichment Fund General Guidelines and may be slightly different.

Eligibility <i>*Note that meeting the eligibility criteria does not guarantee that applications will be funded.</i>	• Legally incorporated not-for-profit organizations. • Organizations with a charitable number. • The organization must be fully operational for one fiscal year and serve the city of Hamilton. • Applicants can be returning CS CEF grantees or first-time applicants. This stream is for one-time project funding, as such, the outcome of this request has no bearing on any other active CS CEF applications. • Individual organizations or collaborating organizations may apply, but only one lead applicant can submit if the request is coming from a collaborative initiative.
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Ineligible Organizations/Applicants	- For-profit organizations and ventures. - Religious organizations, Political parties, Hospitals, Foundations, Funding bodies or organizations that act in the capacity of a funding agency that make financial allocations or contributions to other groups such as service clubs, private and non-profit charitable foundations or for profit charitable foundations. - Organizations whose activities are deemed to come under the jurisdiction of other levels, divisions, departments or agencies of the City or other governments, i.e. school boards, post-secondary institutions, charitable foundations, hospitals, business improvement associations, building non-profit housing, /emergency shelters/residential care facilities etc., all childcare centres, EarlyON programs.
Eligible Project Specific Expenses	Examples of eligible projects include but are not limited to: - Costs associated with obtaining either legal not-for-profit incorporation or registered charitable status. - Various organizational plans (strategic, IDEA, risk management, privacy, cybersecurity etc.). - Facilitating an organization completing first time audited-financial statements. - Governance and policy review and creation. - Costs related to creating systems level change through development of partnership/collaboration at an organizational level.

Ineligible Expenses	• Attendance at annual professional service organization general meetings or conferences. • Ongoing operating costs of any kind. • Publications, marketing, program advertising. • Academic and professional training. • Capital project planning studies or minor capital/equipment. • Mandated training (e.g. Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) or Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) etc. • Fundraising/Revenue generation plan, marketing plans, volunteer management plans/strategies. • Projects that have been previously funded through this stream and Organizations who have received CEF funding from this stream in the immediately preceding year.
Funding Requests	CEF does not guarantee that funding is recommended at the full request amount. • Funding Requests Below \$15,000: CEF funding requests cannot be 100% of the proposed program and must demonstrate additional funding/revenue sources. • The City Enrichment Fund does not fund 100% of program expenses. Application budgets should include diverse revenue in support of the proposed program. • Maximum Funding: \$15,000 Requests exceeding the maximum will not be considered.

Other important criteria	• Applicants with any outstanding City Enrichment Fund Final Reports or other requested follow up material are ineligible for subsequent funding. • Late applications will not be accepted. • CEF applications must not be signed and submitted by City of Hamilton employees or City Councillors. City of Hamilton employees who wish to apply to the City Enrichment Fund must contact the program manager prior to applying. • All applicants, particularly those applying to the Organizational Capacity Building stream, are strongly encouraged to contact staff prior to starting their application/submitting an application to discuss their program details to determine eligibility and applicaton readiness.
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Funding Principles	The City of Hamilton recognizes the value and commitment from the not-for-profit sector by investing through the City Enrichment Fund across seven sectors: Agriculture, Arts, Communities, Culture & Heritage, Community Services, Digital, Environment, Sport & Active Lifestyles. The City Enrichment Fund is guided by the following set of funding principles: - Allocates available funding amongst not-for profit organizations, registered charities, grassroots organizations and professional artist projects. - Allocates funding to all passing applicants. - Provides funding to programs/projects that present diverse revenue sources and a feasible budget. - Supports the programming and service delivery for both returning and new organizations.
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APPLICATION QUESTIONS – ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING

Applicant Information Form:

Complete all questions in this section.

Program Information Form:

Complete all questions in this section.

- ☐

Brief Program description in 60 words.

The information provided in this box will be public. Please write this section as if the reader is not familiar with your program at all.

- ☐ **Organization/Program Objective.** Complete all questions. Data requested for context only and will not be scored.
- ☐ **Provide a brief history of your organization.** Please also indicate the number of years the organization and program have been operating and start date. Also include anything important for us to know about your organization. Data requested for context only and will not be scored.
- ☐ **Detailed Program description in approximately 1,000 words.**
Please ensure you include the following information in your response:
 1. Description of the capacity issue facing your organization. **5 points**
 2. Project Scope – **5 points**
 3. Project Timeline - **3 points**
 4. Project Evaluation - **4 points**
 5. Project Learnings - **3 points**
- ☐ **How will City Enrichment Funding be used? 500 words**
 - Ensure you indicate exactly how funds will be used. For example, will the funds be used for staffing (indicate % of full time equivalent and position), program supplies or subsidized costs?
 - Be sure to specify on what areas funding will be spent and the proportion of the program budget CEF funding will cover for each item. For example .5 staff person..... 10% of program supplies, etc. **5 points**
- ☐ **Describe how this program can be scaled should the total funding request not be received. 500 words**
 If your program is not recommended for the full amount requested, please describe what the impact of less funding would mean both in terms of impact to the program and budget. Please note this response will be used for context or clarification but will not be scored by the adjudication team.
- ☐ **Outcomes 15 points 5 x 3 outcomes**
 - Applicants to the Community Services stream must provide three specific outcomes that relate only to the project you are seeking funding for, **do not** include organizational outcomes.
 - Make sure the item is clear, relates to your program and is measurable. Provide a list of **how** the outcome will be measured.
 - Although not indicated on the question, please include any data results from the last 2 years. Fuller reports could be submitted as an additional uploaded attachment.
- ☐ **Partnerships/Collaborations – 300 words 7 points**
 Applicants to the Organizational Capacity Building stream should focus their response to this question to identifying:

- Program participants within your organization.
- Partnering with other not-for-profit organizations or participating volunteers internal/external to the organization.
- Training opportunities for volunteers and staff that build partnerships/collaborations.

☐ **Team Members and Program Implementation in approximately 300 words.**

- List of project team members and roles - **5 points**
- External Resources on the project team - **2 points**
- Project team as it reflects the community served - **3 points**

☐ **Community Vision 5 points**

- Identify the City priority that best fits the program. Select more than one if applicable.
- Describe “how” the program fits that priority including making reference to specific actions etc.
- Describe if the program is also aligned with any specific City of Hamilton master plans, action plans or strategies
- Examples of other relevant plans for Community Services includes:
[Housing Homeless Action Plan](#)
[Hamilton's Plan for an Age Friendly Community](#)
[Community Safety and Well Being Plan](#)
[Hamilton's Urban Indigenous Strategy](#)
[Hamilton's Food Strategy](#)
[Hamilton Youth Strategy](#)

Organization Capacity Form:

To help us assess the organizational capacity of your organization, please indicate whether you have the following plans, policies or initiatives and when they were last reviewed or revised. Specify the last revision date. If you identify that you are an accredited organization, be prepared to indicate with whom the accreditation completed by, year, and current status

15 points

Please note that based on best practices policies with a reviewed/update date older than 5 years (2020) will be considered as incomplete by adjudicators.²

- ☐ Organization By-Laws
- ☐ Governance Policies
- ☐ CEO/ED Performance Review

² See Gap Analysis Tool – Imagine Canada (2022) - [Imagine Canada Gap Analysis Tool - Standards](#)

- ☐ Strategic Plan
- ☐ Conflict of Interest Policies
- ☐ Human Resource Policies
- ☐ Financial Policies
- ☐ Privacy Policies
- ☐ Health and Safety Policies
- ☐ Client Complaints Policy
- ☐ Anti-Racism Policy
- ☐ Access and Equity Policies
- ☐ Board Recruitment Policies
- ☐ Board Training/Orientation Plan
- ☐ Accreditation with an external governing body, independent/peer review at a national level or other

Program Specific Questions- Organizational Capacity Building Stream:

- ☐ **Addressing Future Challenges for the Organization**
Describe in specific detail how CEF funding for this project will prepare your organization to meet emerging challenges, enhance program delivery, advance and/or create new, innovative programming or systemic change in the human services sector either at an organizational or systems level. **10 points**
- ☐ **Addressing IDEA**
Describe in specific detail how this organizational capacity building project reflects your organization's commitment to advance IDEA. **5 points**

Program Budget:

Complete all budget information **5 points**

Reminder that CEF funding requests of \$15,000 or less cannot be 100% of the proposed program and must demonstrate additional funding/revenue sources. Requests over \$15,000 will not be considered in this stream.

Attachments:

Please note that adjudicators are not required to review optional attachments

Use this checklist when preparing and uploading the attachments

- ☐ Board of Directors list (**mandatory**). Include role titles, length on the Board
- ☐ Audited Financial Statements/Unaudited financial statements. Audited statements **MUST** be signed (**mandatory**)
- ☐ Most recent annual report (**mandatory for incorporated non-profit organizations**)
- ☐ Staff list. Include job titles and whether full or part-time - optional
- ☐ Program Marketing Material . Poster, flyer, pamphlet- optional
- ☐ Program Specific Material (if applicable).
- ☐ Any additional uploads as requested by the Program Manager

IDEA Form:

In an effort to help us understand how IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Accessibility) groups are currently supported through City Enrichment Funds, you will be asked two questions. One will ask you to identify the target population for the specific program you are applying for this application. The other will ask whether any of your board members/governing structure self identify as a member of an equity deserving group.

DECLARATION

Please review all elements and have the appropriate signing authorities sign off on your submission. City of Hamilton employees can not sign a CEF submission.

Reminder – when you sign off with your declaration you are asked to confirm that this guidebook was consulted to complete your application. If you have not, you are advised to ensure your application responses reflect what is requested in this guidebook in order to submit your request at its best potential.

ASSESSMENT PROCESS

- ☐ Every returning application is scored out of 100 : Organizational Capacity 60%, Program Merit 30% and Community Impact 10%
- ☐ Each application is reviewed by an adjudication team of up to 3 reviewers – a combination of community and staff reviewers
- ☐ Applicants will be notified as to the status of their application by June 30th

FINAL REPORT

All applicants who receive funding from the City of Hamilton's City Enrichment Fund must submit a final report as a condition of funding. Reporting requirements can be found in the CEF general guidelines. Reports for the 2025 Community Services Program are due April 15th, 2026. The SMA online system says April 30th, but staff would appreciate if you can submit it earlier if at all possible to allow time for any follow up if required.

CEF Final Reports provide valuable information and enable us to verify that funded activities have taken place as applied for and help us measure and demonstrate the impact of our funding programs. ***Note that having an overdue report will impact your funding consideration for the next grant cycle.***

UNSPENT FUNDS

The City Enrichment Fund operates on an annual cycle. Funds not spent in accordance with your application will need to be returned to the City per the approved CEF guidelines and as outlined in the funding agreement:

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The Recipient acknowledges and agrees to return to the City any surplus or unspent CEF Funds to the City within 30 days after the scheduled completion of the Initiatives, unless an extension is granted by City Council. It is the responsibility of the Recipient to request an extension by contacting the Grant Co-ordinator in writing prior to the expiration of the 30-day period within a calendar year.

For return of funds; Cheques are made payable to the City of Hamilton and can be submitted to the attention of the Grants Coordinator. Kindly notify the Grant Coordinator at Grant.Coordinator@hamilton.ca ONCE payment is in the mail.

Mailing Address: 71 Main Street West, City Hall, 2nd Floor, Hamilton ON, L8P 4Y5.