



City Enrichment Fund (CEF) 2026

Communities, Culture & Heritage Program Area New Projects Handbook



City Enrichment Fund

Communities, Culture & Heritage Program Area

Objective

To support organizations activities, programming, events, and projects that engage the public in strengthening and celebrating community identity – the people, places and things that make up Hamilton.

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

How to apply for a grant

- ☐ Read the **City Enrichment Fund Guidelines** and the **Communities, Culture & Heritage Handbook** for details about the program, stream objectives, eligibility, and criteria.
- ☐ Refer to the **Application Details** section to learn about expectations for each question.
- ☐ You will be required to complete all sections of the application online.
- ☐ Upload all documents (use the checklist to confirm that you have submitted all attachments).

Communities, Culture & Heritage Program Area – Projects Handbook

Objective

To support new projects from cultural organizations that increase public access to cultural experiences, expressions, and content.

Description

The Communities, Culture & Heritage – New Projects funding supports activities that are about community identity - the unique people, places and things that make up the city of Hamilton.

Project themes can honour Hamilton's past, celebrate its present and / or envision its future. Themes can be city-wide or focus on a specific geographic or cultural group. Applicants must demonstrate how the public will interact with the project.

Project funding is for new, not previously offered, activities with a defined time frame. The project must occur within a single year. A project may be funded up to three times over multiple years in this category. A project that has occurred three times will be considered as an Established Activity and is not eligible as a New Project. *

Organizations may submit one application to the New Projects stream.

* Or at the discretion of the Program Manager.

Definition	Open to cultural organizations whose mission is to preserve, research, document, interpret, and celebrate community identity- the people, places, and things that make up the city of Hamilton through projects that occur within a single year and up to three times. Projects must have general city-wide appeal and public access on a free and/or paid basis.
Status of Organization	Incorporated not-for-profit organizations, organizations with charitable status, or an unincorporated group with not-for-profit goals and governance structure.
Maximum Funding	Up to a maximum of \$15,000. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CEF funding requests cannot be 100% of the proposed program and must demonstrate additional funding / revenue sources.• Total funding received from all sources in the City of Hamilton cannot be 100% of the project budget.
Assessment Weighting	40% Organizational Capacity 40% Programming Merit 20% Community Impact

New Projects Guidelines

These guidelines are in addition to the general CEF guidelines and eligibility criteria

Eligibility	<p>In addition to the general CEF eligible criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The project must have occurred less than 3 times. (Projects that have occurred more than 3 times may apply under Events & Established Activities)• The organization's head office must be located within Hamilton <p>Organizations receiving a City Enrichment Fund grant under Events & Established Activities may also apply for New Project funding for eligible projects. Please note, projects must be distinct and unique.</p>
Ineligible Organizations / Projects	<p>In addition to the general CEF ineligible criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Activities that are not intended for the general public• Projects that forecast a deficit• Projects which have already taken place at the time of application submission• Projects which have occurred more than three times• Programs / Projects that are camp and or recreation based• Applicants to Arts Program Area
Eligible Projects	<p>Eligible projects may include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Projects that will increase public participation in cultural activities through exhibits, performances, events, and experiences• Research, documentation and interpretation of community identity, including educational programming, roundtables, workshops, and oral history initiatives aimed at the general public• Design, production, promotion and presentation of exhibitions and associated interpretive material

Eligible Expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs including supplies, fees and expenses for artists, artisans, demonstrators, and performers of cultural and heritage activities • Volunteer costs (e.g. training, food, non-alcoholic beverages, distinctive clothing) • Logistical, production and technical requirements (except for alcohol related costs) • Marketing, promotion, and audience development • Administration • Insurance • Policing and security cost (except for those costs related to alcohol) • Road closure expenses • Evaluation
Ineligible Expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing operations not directly related to the project • Day-to-day collections management activities not directly related to the project such as acquisitions, conservation, accessioning / deaccessioning, cataloguing, inventory, photography, and the digitization of collections; • Purchase of equipment not directly related to the project • Minor capital items exceeding \$2,000 • Development of project proposals or applications • Website development projects linked to in-house operations and not related to the project • Alcohol and associated expenses (permit fees, police, fencing, etc.) required to provide alcohol to project participants • Creation, production and / or distribution of souvenirs • Expenses related to competitions (e.g., purchase of prizes, expenses of jury members) • Expenses not directly related to the project or project components / activities that take place outside of the city of Hamilton • Awards, bursaries grants, prizes, or scholarships

Assessment Criteria	<p>All applicants must be able to demonstrate good use of public funds. Large and small requests will be assessed separately using the following assessment criteria and weighting:</p> <p>40% Organizational Capacity as demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant 's capacity to deliver the project as proposed and in a manner that demonstrates responsible management • Projected project outcomes are realistic • The ability to generate earned and private sector revenue for the project (as needed) • The project demonstrates good use of public funds <p>40% Program Merit as demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A successful track record in project planning and delivery • A clear project direction which reflects the organization's mandate • Effective plan including all necessary resources to allow the project to take place- a balanced and realistic budget, volunteers, staff, time management, etc. • A clear plan to evaluate the success of the project • A project that is new to Hamilton and / or innovative • Appropriate and effective marketing and promotion of the project and identifies a target audience <p>20% Community Impact as demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project will add to the unique identity of Hamilton by providing new, improved, or innovative ways for the public to participate • The project's potential to generate public support, participation, attendance, and its ability to offer meaningful opportunities for volunteers • The project demonstrates strong and successful relationships and partnerships with the for-profit and the not-for-profit community • The project offers a unique cultural experience for the residents of Hamilton • The ability to reach Hamilton's broad diverse community
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New Projects Application

Applicants are to apply through the
[City Enrichment Fund - Survey Monkey Apply Online Platform](#)

- Create an account for organization.
- Applicants are responsible for providing all the information and attachments requested.
- Make updates to the saved organization information, contacts etc. before beginning a new application.
- Save information as you move between pages.
- The City Enrichment Fund will make decisions regarding your eligibility based on the information provided in your application.

APPLICATION

Application Information Form

Applicant Contact Information

Additional Contact persons for your organization: (The CEF recommends including a secondary contact for your organization)

Organization Full Name

Is your organization legal name different than the above organization full name?
Yes / No

Organization Legal Name:

Should your application be successful, under what name are you able to deposit funds? Please note that legal names of organizations will be published.

Organization Establish Date Provide the date that organization was formed / incorporated.

Organization Address

Legal Status or Organization (select all that apply)

- Not-for-profit
- Registered Charity
- Individual artist or collective – *ineligible to apply to CCH program area*
- Unincorporated group with not-for-profit goals and governance structure

Not-For Profit Registration Number and/or Registered Charitable Number

Is your organization's head office located in the City of Hamilton? Yes/No

Will the program for which you are applying take place within the city of Hamilton?
Yes / No

Program Information Form

Program Area: Communities, Culture and Heritage

Is this application for a returning program? Yes/No

To be considered returning, a program or service must be delivered by the same organization and have received funding through the same CEF program area and stream.

CCH Stream: New Projects

Program Name: The name of the event or activity

Provide a brief summary of your program – Please note that this description will be included in a publicly accessible City of Hamilton Council report. This description is not scored. (Max 60 words)

Provide a detailed description of your program (Approx. 1000 words)

- The programming direction Describe your programming theme and objective
- A summary of programming activities
- Program dates and schedule
- Describe any success or challenges from the previous year and how they helped to shape this year's programming. Include your evaluation method
- Location of the program and its significance
- Describe any additional programming and unique activities
- Briefly describe your marketing plans

Specify how funding from the City Enrichment Fund will be used. (Approx. 500 words)

Your description should relate to the details provided in your programming description and to your proposed budget.

Describe how this program can be scaled should the total funding request not be received. (Approx. 500 words)

The City Enrichment Fund does not guarantee that successful applicants will receive their full grant request. Applicants are asked to confirm how they will adapt to funding amounts below their request level.

How will your program increase community participation? (Approx. 500 words)

- Provide details on the participating communities and audiences
- Provide details on your volunteer program(s)
- Does your program bring recognition to the city?
- Cultural impact and / or community impact

What are the measurable outcomes of your program?

Describe the outcome of your program to your organization and / or to the community as a direct result to your activities. Ensure that each outcome is measurable. Multiple measures for a single outcome are acceptable. If your application is successful and you receive funding, you will be required to report back on the outcomes provided.

Provide three measurable outcomes.

The outcomes listed should reflect the capacity project goals in a manner that can be measured and evaluated.

- What is your desired outcome / goal?
- How will you measure your success?
- What is the impact or affect for the organization?

Examples:

Outcome	Measure(s)	Impact or Results Expected
Increased social media presence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100% increase in Facebook 'likes' (total of 400 likes).• 5 Facebook 'shares' per event / program.	An increase in social media activity will expand our audience reach and direct communication.
Increase annual membership by 5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100% renewal rate for 2026 membership (300 total)• Enroll 15 new members (5%)	Our membership has remained at approx. 300 for the past 2 years. With the increased social media presence and focus on membership benefits we hope to attract new members.
Maintain 2025 sponsorship levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• After losing 2 significant sponsors in 2020, the organization is focusing on maintaining our 9 longtime sponsors.	By evaluating the mutual benefits of each sponsor relationship, the organization hopes to enhance the value to current and future sponsors.

Describe both formal and informal program partnerships. How do these relationships enhance your program activities? (Approx. 300 words)

- Community outreach partners and relationships
- Partnerships with other not-for profit and the role of this partnership on your program
- Other program partners
- For-profit partnerships and relationships

List the team members that will ensure your program is well managed and achieves your desired goals. Include a brief explanation of how their expertise / specialization will make your program a success. (Approx. 300 words)

This may include members from your staff, Board of Directors, and / or committee members. Consider how these team members reflect the community you serve.

How does this program enrich the city? (Approx. 300 words)

- What are the benefits and contributions to the community?
- How does your program reach Hamilton's broad diverse community?

Community Vision

Review the City of Hamilton's Community Vision that aligns with this program.

Which of our community priorities align with this program? (select up to three)

Please explain how the event / activity supports between one to three community priorities.

- ☐ Community Engagement and Participation
- ☐ Economic Prosperity & Growth
- ☐ Healthy and Safe Communities
- ☐ Clean and Green Built
- ☐ Environment and Infrastructure
- ☐ Culture and Diversity

Describe how your program is aligned with the community priorities chosen.

(Approx. 200 words)

Please explain how this project supports between one to three community priorities.

Budget

Budget Information

1. Please note your CEF Request for the 2026 year in the budget form under Request Program Year Amount (\$).
2. Grant Requests cannot be 100% of the Total Eligible Program Budget and must demonstrate additional funding / revenue sources (cash only, excludes in-kind).
3. Please note that all funding sources from the City of Hamilton cannot be 100% of program budget.
4. It is recommended that submitted budgets are balanced. Provide comments for programs that present a budget deficit or surplus under Budget Form Notes.
5. Please note that this budget is used by all CEF program areas. Use the most appropriate line items provided in addition to the blank spaces listed as 'other'.

Examples:

Revenues:

Item	Current Program Year Amount (\$)	Previous Program Year Actuals (\$)	Name of Funding Program(s) / Brief Explanation of confirmed amounts, rentals etc.
CEF Request			City Enrichment Fund: Amount requested
Provincial / Federal Government			
Membership Fees			
Admission Fees			

Column 1: Item

List of budget line items

Column 2: Request Program Year Amount (\$)

Provide the budget for the request year (2026)

Column 3: Previous Program Year Actuals (\$)

Provide the budget from the previous year (2025 or the last year the program was presented), or this column leave blank if the application is for a new program which has not yet taken place.

Column 4: Name of Funding Program(s) / Brief Explanation of confirmed amounts, rentals etc.

Provide point form, brief notes to support proposed budget of line items (point form). Some examples include:

- Confirm government funding, sponsorship etc., with *Pending or Confirmed*.
- Provide a breakdown of a line item i.e. *Total vendor fees, 15 vendors x \$250*.
- Provide notes for significant variances between the previous and request year i.e. *\$5K decrease as new sponsor is providing marketing services in-kind*.

Expenses:

Item	Current Program Year Amount (\$)	Previous Program Year Actuals (\$)	Brief Explanation of Expense Line Item (Budgeted vs Actuals)
Venue Rental			
Materials			
Other			

Column 1: Item

List of budget line items

Column 2: Current Program Year Amount (\$)

Provide the budgeted expenses for the request year (2026)

Column 3: Previous Program Year Actuals (\$)

Provide the expenses from the previous year (2025 or the last year the program was presented)

Column 4: Brief Explanation of Expense Line (Budgeted vs Actuals)

Provide point form, brief notes to support proposed budget of line items (point form). Some examples include:

- Provide information on new expense items i.e. *New family zone for 2026, includes set up (\$XXX) and animator fees (\$XXX).*
- Provide notes for significant variances between the previous and request year i.e. *Increase of artist fees with launch of new stage.*

In-Kind Expenses:

Item	Current Program Year Budget Amount (\$)	Previous Program Year Actuals (\$)	Brief Explanation of Expense Line Item (Budgeted vs Actuals)
Estimated Volunteer Expenses			
In-Kind Rent Expenses			

In-Kind expenses will not be included in the overall eligible budget but add to the overall understanding of the program.

- Provide the estimated volunteer hours and value of other in-kind contributions.
- For Volunteer Expenses, calculate at \$21/Volunteer hour contributed

Budget Notes:

If needed, please provide brief, point form notes to support the proposed budget.

- Significant variances between the previous year and request year
- If projecting or carrying a surplus or deficit, please include a surplus justification or deficit reduction plan

Attachments

Organization Attachments:

- Board of Directors list (**mandatory**). Include role titles, length on BOD
- Staff list (**mandatory**). Include job titles and whether full or part-time for both administrative and artistic staff. If volunteer run, indicate lead volunteers with titles and explain time-commitment.
- Financial Statements (**mandatory**). If audited financial statements are not available, then unaudited statements are required. Please note, for grant requests greater than or equal to \$30,000 audited financial statements are mandatory.

Program Attachments:

- Program Marketing Material (**if applicable**). Poster, flyer, pamphlet
- Program Specific Material
Optional up to 4 program materials, including;
 - Most recent annual report
 - Additional marketing material
 - Performance programs
 - Images

IDEA Form

Please note: this task is not scored.

A form collecting information about the IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Accessibility) groups supported through City Enrichment Funds. Applicants are asked to specify the target population(s) of their programs, and equity designated groups represented within their organization's governance structure.

Applications are not evaluated based on this form, which serves only for data collection.

Declaration Form

Declaration, terms of use, applicant signature(s).

Communications (confirming correct email)

Outstanding CEF Final Reports: Yes / No

Two signatures are required – Recommended 1 Board Member and 1 Staff member.

Submitting Your Application

After each task is finished, please press the **‘Mark as Complete’** button on the lower right of the task window. Once all tasks are marked complete, and the application is ready to be submitted, please review the application for completeness by selecting **‘Review’** (bottom right).

Applicants will be prompted to review each page. Any incomplete question / field will be clearly marked.

After you Apply

- The application owner will receive confirmation from the portal that the application has been submitted.
- If needed, CEF staff will contact the main applicant by email or phone to confirm the details in the application and ensure the application is complete.
- If the application receives a passing score (above 60%), the application score and recommended level of funding will be presented to the City of Hamilton Grants Sub-Committee for review and approval in spring 2026.
- Funding notifications will be delivered by email. The email will include instructions to receive your funding and a timeline of when funds will be released.
- CEF funding must be used in the same year that it is awarded.
- Grantees must acknowledge the support provided by the City of Hamilton through the funds received by the City Enrichment Fund in program materials and promotion.
- Grantees must complete a Final Report and submit it to CEF staff by February of the following year. A template will be provided by CEF staff after confirmation of funding is received, by Fall 2026. In the Final Report, grantees are required provide the following information:
 - The anticipated vs. actual program budget
 - Examples of any marketing materials, supporting documents, photos, etc. that help tell the story of the initiative and its impact.

- The measurable outcomes and measures included in within the application. Grantees must report on how your initiative achieved this goal by describing the direct or indirect impact of the program or project on the organization or the community.
- Describe any unanticipated changes made to the delivery or implementation of the program.
- Describe learnings from this initiative and provide recommendations to improve this initiative if the organization were to initiate it again, or if the organization was providing advice others considering a similar initiative.

Organizations that do not provide complete Final Report(s) for each program that receives CEF funding will not be eligible to apply for future CEF grants.