



Hamilton

2026

City Enrichment Fund Community Services

Program Handbook
Emerging Needs – New Programs



Contents: [October 31, 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 (IDEA) ¹
- Address underserved target groups
- Promote systems change and explore service delivery innovation
- Strengthen the organizational capacity in local human services
- 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](#).

EMERGING NEEDS -- NEW APPLICANTS

Regardless of how long your program has been operational, if you have never received funding from CEF before you must apply to the Emerging Needs – New Requests Stream.

Objective

To foster community programs that identify new emerging community needs, target underserved groups/geographic areas, prioritize equity deserving groups, encourage either program delivery innovation or systems change while also demonstrating alignment with one of the Established Program categories.

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 and 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 like to include as background or context

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

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>	• Not-for-profit organizations – unincorporated groups with not-for-profit goals and governance structure are not eligible under the Community Services Stream • Organizations with a charitable number • Programs must provide service to residents of the City of Hamilton. Programs that operate in Hamilton, but service clients who reside outside Hamilton on not eligible. • Applicants must operate year-round and offer programs that are open to the public and publicized city wide. • Funded activities must take place within the city of Hamilton.
Ineligible Organization, Applicants, or Activities	• For-profit organizations and ventures + Religious activities except in cases where religious organizations can demonstrate clear boundaries between both its program and budget, between religious activities and the program requesting a grant. • Political parties, Hospitals, Foundations, and 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. • Fundraising activities and events of any kind regardless of target group • 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 for some examples. • Specifically in the Community Services stream this includes but is not limited to: funding to build non-profit housing, operating funds for the shelter component of emergency shelters/residential care facilities etc., all childcare centres, EarlyON programs, and all programs providing before/after school childcare /recreational programming/sports of any kind in schools. • Applicants deemed ineligible will be assigned a DNQ – Does Not Qualify

Eligible Program Specific Expenses	Administration costs + Program Delivery costs
Ineligible Expenses	- Capital items e.g. equipment, renovations, maintenance of any permanent infrastructure, purchase of any structures, buildings., etc. - Deficit reduction - or to make up funding shortfalls resulting from programs of any kind. - Costs associated with replacing subsidies, continuing sources of funding or revenues including use of reserves or accumulated equity, nor will it replace payments, which could be made under purchase of service agreements. - Property taxes will not be added as a separate program. Taxes are to be included as part of the operating costs when calculating the budget and required funding. - Costs associated with research, program evaluation, needs assessments, development of fundraising plans. - Retroactive activity - HST
Funding Requests	CEF does not guarantee that funding is recommended at the full request amount. - Funding Requests Over \$15,001: Funding requests should not exceed 30% of the total program budget. - Funding Requests Below \$15,000: CEF funding requests cannot be 100% of the proposed program and must demonstrate additional funding/revenue sources. - Operating Streams: The 30% funding policy continues to be applied within all operating streams. The City Enrichment Fund does not fund 100% of program expenses. Application budgets should include diverse revenue in support of the proposed program.

Other important criteria	- Applicants with any outstanding City Enrichment Fund Final Reports or other requested follow up material are ineligible for subsequent funding. - CEF applicants must ensure the submitted application meets the CEF Program Area funding objectives and that the organization mandate and proposed program are in alignment with the selected program area. Where cross-over may occur, applicants are encouraged to speak with staff. - Submitted applications that do not meet the CEF Program Area objectives and eligibility do not qualify for funding and are noted as DNQ. - 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. - Organizations may only submit to one program The City Enrichment Fund does not provide funding for one program under multiple CEF Program Areas and Streams. - All applicants to the Emerging Needs stream, are strongly encouraged to contact staff (csgrant@hamilton.ca) prior to starting their application /submitting an application to discuss their program details to determine eligibility and applicaton readiness
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 and programs.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS – EMERGING NEEDS – NEW REQUESTS

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. Include specific information on target group, program location and hours of availability. **4 points**
 2. Program Statistics – if your program directly serves people, please complete the chart and provide the total number of clients you have served until September 30th of the current year AND a projection as to how many clients you anticipate serving the following year. If your program is an indirect service, you must still provide program statistics projections. **3 points**
 3. Years the Program has been operational. This data was initially requested in another question in the Application Form, but Emerging Needs applicants are requested to include this component again in the program description as it is a scorable element. **5 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% og program supplies, etc. **4 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.
- ☐ **How will your program increase community participation from an inclusivity focus? 500 words. 10 points**
 - Thinking along a continuum that includes policies, training, program delivery, physical space, location, and referral processes etc. describe how your program addresses the unique needs of the following equity deserving groups: Indigenous communities, persons with disabilities, Francophones, newcomers and immigrants, refugees, racialized communities, 2SLGBTQ+ community, geographically underserved areas, low-income individuals/families, and Women.
- ☐ **Outcomes 15 points 5 x 3 outcomes**
 - Applicants to the Community Services stream must provide three specific outcomes **that relate only to the program 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 recent data results with this question in the final column. Fuller reports could be submitted as an additional uploaded attachment, which adjudicators may review for context only not for scoring.
- ☐ **Partnerships/Collaborations – 300 words 4 points**
 - We also would like to know which specific networks, planning tables, working groups etc. you are involved in that enhance your ability to deliver **this** program.
 - Describe formal program partnerships that you have that relate specifically to this program. Do not include generalized partnerships or organizational examples.
 - How do these partnerships enhance your program activities?
- ☐ **Team Members and Program Implementation in approximately 300 words. 5 points**

- Provide a bulleted list describing **who** from the organization or community will actually be implementing the program (staff, volunteer, peer, seconded staff or volunteer) **and why** the organization chose to implement the program in this way.
- Please be sure to indicate **how** the individuals implementing will contribute to the success of the program.

☐ **How does this program enrich the city? Approximately 300 words.**

Your response should include all three of the following:

- Description of the local community need **7 points**
- Evidence to support the need – include any specific local, provincial, national statistics, best practice evidence, or program evaluations **6 points**
- Some possible resources for statistical data include:

[City of Hamilton Open Data](#)

[City of Hamilton Ward Profiles](#)

[Open Data Ontario](#)

[Statistics Canada](#)

☐ **Community Vision 3 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
- ☐ 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 or provincial level.

EMERGING NEEDS SPECIFIC ALIGNMENT AND FINANCIAL NEED QUESTIONS:

☐ **Category Alignment Checklist**

To maintain consistency in the Community Services Program, applicants requesting funding through the Emerging Needs category must demonstrate how their program supports one of the categories from the Established – Returning Applicants Program

Specify which one of the following Community Services categories your Emerging Needs request aligns with: you will see a drop box with the eligible funding streams and select one. **Not Scored**

ESTABLISHED PROGRAM CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

A. **No One Is Hungry or Without Shelter**

Programs operating from an Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA)³ framework targeted to low income individuals/families that:

- Address food shortages for low income individuals/families experiencing economic/physical barriers accessing adequate, nutritious, and culturally responsive food while also addressing special dietary needs when possible

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

³ To learn more about how the City of Hamilton operates from the IDEA framework - see [IDEA - CITY OF HAMILTON](#)

- Foster innovation, partnerships and systems change to create a healthy, sustainable, and just food system for Hamilton.
- Programs that attempt to locate, access, or retain adequate, safe secure housing, supportive housing, or transitional housing

Stream Aligns with the following City of Hamilton Initiatives

- [City of Hamilton Housing and Homelessness Action Plan](#)
- [Hamilton's Food Strategy](#)
- [Declaration of Emergency Homelessness, Mental Health, and Opioid Addiction](#)

B. Everyone Feels Safe

Programs operating from an Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA) framework targeted to children/youth/adults that:

Support community based programs for those experiencing physical, psychological, sexual, emotional, and financial abuse or neglect

- Focus specifically on intimate partner violence within a continuum of services
- Create safe and inclusive spaces

Stream Aligns with the following City of Hamilton Initiatives

- [City of Hamilton Community Safety and Well-Being Plan.](#)
- [Declaration of Gender-Based Violence and Intimate-Partner Violence as an epidemic](#)

C. Every Child and Family Thrives

Community based programs operating from an Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA) framework targeted to children and guardians facing barriers to

access and families experiencing short/long term crisis that:

- Foster child/guardian or child/adult mentor interaction
- Assist families in crisis by offering mechanisms that support families to reintegrate, stay together, or overcome significant trauma
- Offer targeted programming to support families facing specific barriers to access

Stream Aligns with the following City of Hamilton Initiatives

- [Early Years Community Plan](#)
- [City of Hamilton Community Safety and Well-Being Plan.](#)

D. No Youth is Left Behind:

Community Based Programs operating from an Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA) framework targeted to at risk youth that:

- Assist with housing/homelessness, mental health supports, addictions, or conflict with the law
- Support youth where they are either through outreach or by creating safe Drop In spaces
- Promote social navigation, program innovation, systems change or collaborative proposals

Stream Aligns with the following City of Hamilton Initiatives

- [City of Hamilton Youth Strategy](#)
- [City of Hamilton Community Safety and Well-Being Plan.](#)

E. Everyone Can Age in Place

Programs operating from an Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA) framework targeted to seniors or persons with disabilities that allows them to delay entering a residential/long term care facility by remaining at the home of their choice in the community that:

- Support community-based programs that allow individuals to age in place
- Foster collaboration amongst community-based programs to better serve individuals
- Prioritize access to community-based programs for equity deserving groups

Stream Aligns with the following City of Hamilton Initiatives

- [City of Hamilton Age Friendly Strategy](#)

F. Community Capacity Grows

Programs operating from an Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA) framework supporting community wide initiatives that:

- Provide targeted outreach, community development, social navigation, social development, or human services collaboration
- Promote systems change, program innovation, or collaborative proposals

Stream Aligns with the following City of Hamilton Initiatives

- [City of Hamilton Community Safety and Well-Being Plan.](#)
- [City of Hamilton Community Engagement](#)

G. Everyone Has Someone to Talk to

Programs operating from an Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA) framework targeted to low-income individuals, couples, and families that:

- Reduce economic/physical barriers to community counselling programs.

- Ensure access to culturally appropriate counselling.

Stream Aligns with the following City of Hamilton Initiatives

- [Declaration of Emergency Homelessness, Mental Health, and Opioid Addiction](#)

☐ **Category Alignment Explanation**

Please explain how the program for which funding is being requested through emerging needs fits with the specific category from the Established – Returning Applicants Program Area selected above. **10 points**

☐ **Financial Need**

Since the City Enrichment fund has a limit as to the % that a program can be funded it is important for us to have a clear understanding of this program's current funding status.

- Please indicate what other specific funding sources have been sought for this program.
- Provide an update on the status of all funding sources identified in your budget even if the status whether it is still unknown or confirmed.
- Explain why CEF funding is needed for this program **5 points**

PROGRAM BUDGET:

Complete all budget information **4 points**

Reminder that CEF Funding Requests Funding below \$15,000 CEF funding cannot be 100% of the proposed program and must demonstrate additional funding/revenue sources. Requests over \$15,001 should not exceed 30% of the total program budget. If you are applying for \$15,001 or more requests that exceed the 30% maximum will be paused in the CEF application process until applicants revise their request to come within the 30% funding maximum. If unsure, please contact the CS Program Manager – csgrant@hamilton.ca

To calculate the 30% maximum – use the following formula:

Total Program Expenditures from the Budget Summary multiplied by .3 will give you the 30% maximum figure.

E.g. Total Program Expenditures - \$125,362 x .3 = \$37,608 is the 30% maximum that could be requested

For applicants that may be receiving other funding from the City of Hamilton, please be sure to include this information and indicate whether these would be considered “flow through” dollars from the Province or Federal government. If the City of Hamilton funding you receive is actual net levy funding, indicate whether the program for which you are applying for are ineligible to be funded from city funding.

ATTACHMENTS:

- ☐ Board of Directors list Include role titles, length on the Board **(mandatory)**.
- ☐ Audited Financial Statements/Unaudited financial statements **(mandatory)** Audited statements MUST be signed
- ☐ 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

Please note that adjudicators are not required to review optional attachments and they are non-scorable

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.

Please note that completion of these questions is voluntary

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 review your application to ensure that your responses reflect what is requested in this guidebook in order to achieve your best score in the adjudication phase.

ASSESSMENT PROCESS:

- ☐ Every returning application is scored out of 100 : Organizational Capacity 38%, Program Merit 24% and Community Impact 38%
- ☐ 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.***

If you received CEF funding greater than \$15,001, the program budget actuals provided in your Final Report will be used to update the 30% maximum calculation. ***CEF funding received in excess of 30% will be required to be returned.***

UNSPENT FUNDS/30% FUNDING MAXIMUM EXCEEDED

The City Enrichment Fund operates on an annual cycle. Funds not spent in accordance with your application or any funds determined to have been received but exceed the 30% maximum, will need to be returned to the City per the approved CEF guidelines and as outlined in the funding agreement:

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.