



City of Toronto Partnership with Bloomberg Philanthropies' Innovation Teams Program

Date: January 27, 2017
To: Executive Committee
From: City Manager
Wards: All

SUMMARY

In January 2017, the City of Toronto was notified that it was successful in its application for the Bloomberg Philanthropies' Innovation Teams (i-Teams) Program.

The i-Teams Program is administered by Bloomberg Philanthropies, an international organization founded by former New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg as a philanthropic venture. The i-Teams Program provides cities with \$500,000 per year for up to three years to establish a dedicated innovation team to help city leaders resolve pressing issues through innovation, technology, new approaches, collaboration and partnerships.

This report seeks Council approval to establish a City of Toronto Innovation Team consistent with the requirements of the City's partnership with Bloomberg Philanthropies' i-Teams Program. The costs associated with a City of Toronto Innovation Team will be offset by the grant provided by the i-Teams Program.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Manager recommends that:

1. City Council authorize the City Manager to establish a City of Toronto Innovation Team consistent with the requirements of the City's partnership with Bloomberg Philanthropies' Innovation Teams Program, and authorize the City Manager to accept a grant from Bloomberg Philanthropies' Innovation Teams Program that provides funding to cover the costs of the Innovation Team.
2. City Council authorize the City Manager to sign an agreement with the Bloomberg Philanthropies' Innovation Teams Program in a form acceptable to the City Solicitor.

3. City Council approve an increase of \$500,000 gross and \$0 net to the 2017 Budget Committee Recommended Operating Budget for the City Manager's Office within the Executive Management service, with the full amount to be recovered from the Bloomberg Philanthropies' Innovation Teams Program grant.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The 2017 Operating Budget for the City Manager's Office, as recommended by Budget Committee on January 24, 2017, will increase by \$0.500 million in gross expenditures to provide funding to establish a dedicated Innovation Team. This initiative will be fully funded through the Bloomberg Philanthropies' Innovation Teams Program grant. Additional positions are not being recommended at this time, if the determination is made that added complement will be required for the Innovation Team, staff will report back through Budget Committee to seek any required Council approval for added positions.

This grant will provide funding to establish an Innovation Team, any costs identified through the team to fund a specific project or initiative will not be eligible for funding under the program.

Any additional implementation costs or potential expenditure savings identified through innovative approaches or solutions to the challenges identified by City divisions and reviewed by the Innovation Team will be brought forward for Council's consideration through future year Budget processes.

The Deputy City Manager & Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

There is no decision history on this program.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Bloomberg Philanthropies

Bloomberg Philanthropies is an international organization founded by former New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg as a philanthropic venture. The organization's mission is to partner with cities to build resources and implement programs across multiple disciplines. According to Bloomberg Philanthropies, their aim is to improve urban environments by collaborating with cities to develop best practices, build consensus and foster key relationships. The organization helps to foster public-private partnerships to assist cities build resources and implement programs. The organization focuses on five key areas: Public Health, Environment, Education, Government Innovation and the Arts.

Bloomberg Philanthropies' Innovation Teams Program

Innovation Teams (i-Teams), is a program administered by Bloomberg Philanthropies designed to help a city address complex problems through innovation, technology, collaboration, and public-private partnerships. A key component of the i-Teams Program is to establish a dedicated team to help city leaders resolve pressing issues through innovation, technology, new approaches, collaboration and partnerships.

Under the program, a city is provided with a \$500,000 grant annually for up to three years to establish and fund an innovation team. In addition to the grant, a city receives implementation support, such as professional development programming, coaching and expertise aimed at developing skills and institutional capacity, and opportunities to exchange lessons and learned and best practices with peers in other cities.

City of Toronto is one of the seven cities selected for the third cohort of program. Other cities selected include: Anchorage, Austin, Detroit, and Durham.

COMMENTS

The City of Toronto is the first Canadian city to receive Bloomberg Philanthropies' i-Teams Program grant. The City of Toronto's participation in the i-Teams Program presents a unique opportunity for the City to access and leverage expertise, and support, including financial support, to examine and develop solutions for complex city challenges through innovation, technology, partnerships, and entrepreneurs.

The i-Teams Program further provides an opportunity to advance the City's strategic priorities with a focus on innovation, new approaches, and initiatives, and collaboration with local business and community partners.

City of Toronto Innovation Team

A key component of the i-Teams Program is creating a dedicated innovation team. The City of Toronto's application to participate in the i-Teams Program was positioned around creating a centralized team to lead innovative projects with a variety of City of Toronto divisions that would have an immediate positive impact for the public.

This report recommends that the City Manager be authorized to establish an innovation team consistent with the requirements of the i-Teams Program.

The mandate of the City of Toronto Innovation Team would be to facilitate the creation of ambitious human-centered solutions to City challenges through external partnerships, technology leadership, design thinkers and entrepreneurs. The City of Toronto Innovation Team would canvass City divisions for challenges that, if resolved, would have an immediate positive impact for the public, the administration or a public service. The Innovation Team will then work to identify innovative approaches, solutions, and external partners to support, solve, or identify solutions to the challenges identified by City divisions.

The operating costs of the City of Toronto Innovation Team will be covered by the financial supported provided by i-Teams Program.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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