



REPORT FOR ACTION

2020 Toronto Urban Health Fund Allocations and Review Process

Date: May 29, 2020
To: Board of Health
From: Medical Officer of Health
Wards: All

SUMMARY

This report outlines the Toronto Urban Health Fund's funding priorities, review process, and funding recommendations for Board of Health approval. Toronto Public Health staff recommend the total allocation of \$3,421,368 for 13 one-year projects totalling \$635,508 and 39 three-year projects totalling \$2,785,860 to be used between July 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021. Recommended projects focus on HIV prevention through sexual transmission, harm reduction, child and youth resiliency and Indigenous health promotion.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Medical Officer of Health recommends that:

1. The Medical Officer of Health allocate \$3,421,368 for 13 one-year projects from 2020-2021 totalling \$635,508 and 39 three-year projects from 2020-2023 totalling \$2,785,860, as recommended by Toronto Public Health staff and outlined in Appendices 2 and 3 to this report.
2. The Medical Officer of Health execute Funding Agreements with the approved applicants.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact associated with this report beyond what has already been approved in the 2020 Operating Budget for Toronto Public Health.

DECISION HISTORY

On May 7, 2020, the Board of Health approved the change to the review and allocation process for funding proposals submitted to the Toronto Urban Health Fund for the 2020 funding cycle such that Toronto Public Health staff perform the review process, in lieu of Toronto Urban Health Fund Review Panel and Toronto Urban Health Fund Indigenous Review Panel members.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.HL16.3>

On July 8, 2019, The Board of Health approved the Toronto Urban Health Fund Funding Priorities and Objectives 2020-2026 and requested the Medical Officer of Health to include \$422,000.00 for the Toronto Urban Health Fund Indigenous Funding Stream.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.HL8.3>

COMMENTS

The modernized Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS 2018) from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care mandates the provision of HIV/AIDS prevention, and illicit substance misuse prevention (including harm reduction strategies) services through local public health units. The Toronto Urban Health Fund (TUHF) supports the Board of Health (BOH) and Toronto Public Health (TPH) in meeting the OPHS, by providing funding for community-based non-profit organizations that build individual and community capacity to support HIV prevention, harm reduction, and child and youth resiliency.

Community-based funding strategically addresses a variety of factors relevant to HIV transmission and substance misuse including cultural and language barriers; stigma and discrimination; distrust of government organizations; and colonization. High risk populations include people who use illicit substances, those who are at-risk of engaging in high-risk sexual behaviors, and Indigenous peoples. Community agencies are uniquely positioned to provide accessible, relevant, timely and culturally safe HIV prevention, harm reduction, and child and youth resiliency programming to marginalized and vulnerable populations in Toronto.

Funding Criteria and Priorities

TUHF provides one and three-year funding opportunities for both mainstream and Indigenous organizations. The objective of One-year funding is to fund innovative interventions or pilot projects that address emerging or short-term public health issues, or to conduct needs assessments in order to increase the understanding of the health and programming needs of high-risk populations. The objective of Three-year funding is to fund projects that are based on effective interventions and community-based best practices that are flexible and responsive to longer-term trends.

Mainstream funded projects must address the needs of TUHF priority populations through resiliency building, organizational and community capacity building, and health promotion strategies including creating supportive environments, strengthening community action, re-orienting health services, and developing personal skills. Projects funded under the Indigenous stream must use a wholistic approach to Indigenous health and healing that is modeled around traditional ways of knowing. Projects funded in this stream must promote Indigenous self-determination, cultural safety, and health, in addition to addressing HIV and/or substance use prevention within Indigenous populations. Appendix 1 outlines the objectives and targeted priority populations for the four TUHF funding streams.

In addition, consideration is given to projects servicing high-needs geographic areas, such as City-designated Neighbourhood Improvement Areas (NIAs) or neighbourhoods with a high incidence of HIV, Hepatitis C, or at higher risk of substance use and overdose. Similarly, further consideration is provided to projects with services targeting youth residing in NIAs and African Caribbean and Black populations. Emphasis is also placed on reducing the duplication of services targeting these populations by other community agencies, funders, and TPH.

Community Outreach, Request for Proposals and Support – 2020 Project Solicitation Process

The TUHF application process is a two-phased process involving the submission of an Expression of Interest (EOI) that is followed by the submission of a funding proposal for successful EOI applicants. In October 2019, TUHF received 105 EOIs requesting \$8.989 million for the 2020 funding year (8 from the Indigenous stream, 24 from the HIV Prevention through Sexual Transmission stream, 25 from the Harm Reduction stream, and 48 from the Child and Youth Resiliency stream). Of the 105 EOIs received, 35 were for One-year projects and 70 were for Three-year projects. Expressions of Interest were independently reviewed by TUHF staff using a standardized TUHF project eligibility and assessment criteria. Six EOIs were assessed to be ineligible, 42 EOIs did not meet TUHF assessment criteria and 57 successful EOIs were invited to submit funding proposals.

A total of 52 proposals requesting \$4.2 million for the 2020 funding cycle were received in February 2020 (six from the North, seven from the East, thirty-six from the South, and three from the West regions of the City, five applicants withdrew from the process). Of the 52 proposals submitted, 5 were from the Indigenous stream 12 were from the HIV Prevention through Sexual Transmission stream, 15 from the Harm Reduction stream, 20 from the Child and Youth Resiliency stream. Twelve are requesting funding for One-year projects and 40 for Three-year projects.

Toronto Urban Health Fund staff supported potential applicants by providing four EOI writing workshops for mainstream organizations, two EOI workshops for Indigenous organizations, and four proposal writing workshops. In addition, TUHF staff were available to applicants for clarification around the applications, review, and allocations process, as well as to provide technical support on the application forms.

Review Process

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the suspension of City Council, committee, board and tribunal meetings, the Board of Health was unable to appoint Review Panel members and all Review Panel meetings were cancelled. For the 2020 funding cycle, the review of funding proposals and the allocation of funds were conducted by TUHF staff in lieu of review panel members. For funding proposals submitted for the Indigenous stream, members of the TUHF Indigenous Advisory Circle were consulted.

TUHF staff used an assessment matrix to assess proposals based on the following established criteria: 1) evidence informed/based approaches; 2) project planning and development; 3) target population reach; 4) population needs and risks addressed; and 5) cost effectiveness. In addition, allocation recommendations considered the distribution of funding across the four funding streams, priority populations, geographic, and epidemiological needs.

Summary of Recommendations

On May 7, 2020, applicants were informed of preliminary TUHF staff funding recommendations. Twenty-eight proposals were recommended for funding, sixteen proposals received conditional funding recommendations and eight proposals were not recommended for funding. An amount of \$169,219.00, representing 5% of the allocations budget, was set aside for the appeals process.

On May 22, 2020, TUHF staff considered all appeal submissions from eight applicants requesting \$336,868.15. TUHF Staff considered the appeals and two additional projects were recommended while three projects received adjustments to their initial recommended budgets. A total of 52 projects (6 from the North, 7 from the East, 36 from the South, and three from the West regions of the City) are recommended for funding. Table 1 provides a summary of the distribution of funded project by TUHF funding streams. Table 2 provides a summary of the distribution of funding to TUHF target populations

Table 1 - Funding Allocation Recommendation by Funding Stream

| Funding Stream | One-Year Project Recommendations \$ (# projects) | Three-Year Project Recommendations \$ (# projects) | Total \$ (% total) | Total # projects (%) |
|--|---|---|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Indigenous | \$ 50,783 (1) | \$ 380,499 (4) | \$ 431,282 (13%) | 5 (10%) |
| HIV Prevention through Sexual Transmission | \$ 129,367 (2) | \$ 744,996 (10) | \$ 874,363 (26%) | 12 (23%) |
| Harm Reduction | \$ 132,012 (2) | \$ 952,663 (13) | \$ 1,084,675 (32%) | 15 (29%) |

| Funding Stream | One-Year Project Recommendations \$ (# projects) | Three-Year Project Recommendations \$ (# projects) | Total \$ (% total) | Total # projects (%) |
|----------------------------|--|--|---------------------|----------------------|
| Child and Youth Resiliency | \$ 323,346 (8) | \$ 707,702 (12) | \$ 1,031,048 (30%) | 20 (38%) |
| Total | \$ 635,508 (13) | \$ 2,697,376 (39) | \$ 3,421,368 (100%) | 52 (100%) |

Table 2 - TUHF Target Population Funding Distribution

| TUHF Population | \$ Recommended | Proportion |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|------------|
| People who inject drugs | \$ 502,453.00 | 15% |
| Indigenous populations | \$ 491,029.00 | 14% |
| Men who have sex with men | \$ 490,644.00 | 14% |
| People who use drugs | \$ 432,520.00 | 13% |
| African Caribbean Black population | \$ 382,447.00 | 11% |
| Vulnerable and high-risk youth | \$ 309,228.00 | 9% |
| People who are street-involved | \$ 224,345.00 | 7% |
| People engaged in sex work | \$ 171,177.00 | 5% |
| People in prisons | \$ 134,243.00 | 4% |
| Sex Partners | \$ 93,802.00 | 3% |
| Trans-gendered people | \$ 84,691.00 | 2% |
| People living with HIV/AIDS | \$ 40,346.00 | 1% |
| Total | \$ 3,421,368.00 | 100% |

Funding Oversight and Management

The management of the TUHF program is aligned with the City of Toronto Grants Policy, the City of Toronto Risk Management Framework; and the TPH Accountability Reporting Framework. Toronto Public Health staff oversee and monitor funding

recipients' service delivery, data collection and reporting, financial reporting, and project evaluation throughout the lifecycle of the funding agreements. Should funded organizations not meet the conditions of their Funding Agreements at any point, TPH will discontinue the funding.

Project Monitoring

Funded projects are bound by the terms and conditions outlined in their Funding Agreements. Material changes to the budget and nature of the contracted activities for which funding has been approved require prior written approval by TPH staff. Project monitoring is conducted by TPH staff through site visits, consultations, and face-to-face, phone and e-mail communications with the funded organization. Toronto Public Health staff also observe workshops, presentations, and community events, and assess resources developed by funded agencies. Organizations must complete all contracted services to qualify for future funding. All funded agencies are required to submit interim and year-end progress and financial reports for their projects in each year of funding.

CONTACT

Nicole Welch, Director, Child Health and Development/Healthy Communities, Toronto Public Health, 416-338-7435, Nicole.Welch@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Dr. Eileen de Villa
Medical Officer of Health

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix 1 - Toronto Urban Health Fund Priority Populations and Funding Objectives

Appendix 2 - 2020 Toronto Urban Health Fund Funding Allocation Recommendations for One-Year Projects (2020-2021) and Three-Year Projects (2020-2023)

Appendix 3 - Project Summaries and Recommended Activities for Each Project Recommended for Funding